

14th April, 1984

33p

shoot!

Battle to keep
Bryan Robson

Colour

**MERSEY
MAGIC**

**RANGERS
REVENGE**

Chelsea glory boys

**ENGLAND'S
BEST STRIKER?
'Not Ian Rush!'**

**BRITAIN'S
EUROCRATS**
Preview Semi-Final ties



Everton's Graeme Sharp holds off Mark Lawrenson of Liverpool during the Milk Cup Final.

**Villa boss
blasts back**

**ABERDEEN CHASE
NICHOLAS**

British is best

NEVER before have British clubs had a better opportunity to make a clean sweep of Europe's glamour competitions than they have over the next few weeks.

No writer of sporting fiction could have dreamed-up a more compelling programme of European Semi-Final ties than those that will send British fans scuttling over the English Channel in large numbers over the next fortnight.

The draw offers our clubs the thrilling prospect of making it an "all British" show, involving six of our clubs, when the Finals of the three European competitions are played at the end of the season.

SHOOT, view!

This could be the line-up for the Finals: European Cup — Dundee United v Liverpool; European Cup-Winners' Cup — Aberdeen v Manchester United; UEFA Cup — Nottingham Forest v Tottenham Hotspur.

British clubs have established a growing influence in Europe over the past ten years. Aberdeen won the European Cup-Winners' Cup last season and the deeds of Liverpool, Nottingham Forest and Aston Villa before that are well recorded.

Britain's leading clubs are so well thought of that Liverpool, Manchester United and Spurs are being quoted by bookmakers as favourites to win their respective European competitions.

That is possibly an unfair burden for them to carry into their Semi-Final ties but it shows the respect that Europe has for the best of British football.

Despite all the criticism, it says much for the quality of club sides in the English and Scottish Leagues that they can confidently expect to have several representatives in the Finals, if not all six.

The hope is that success at club level in Europe will, eventually, restore the English and Scottish national sides to the standards they once enjoyed in world football.

BRITAIN IN EUROPE

CUP-WINNERS' CUP
Semi-Finals

Final in Basle, May 16.

STAR WRITER

BRYAN ROBSON

OUR SECRET

I AM told that my confrontation with Michel Platini should be one of the highlights of Manchester United's European Cup-Winners' Cup Semi-Final tie against Juventus at Old Trafford on Wednesday, April 11.

It will be the second time in a matter of weeks that I have indulged in a midfield battle with the Frenchman, whom many regard as Europe's best player, and I promise to do better this time.

That England defeat in Paris still haunts me and I'm determined to make some amends by playing better against Platini of Juventus than I did against Platini of France.

Overcoming

Let me say immediately that Manchester United fear no one after overcoming Barcelona — and the great Diego Maradona.

We were by no means favourites to beat the Spaniards but we

MANCHESTER UNITED v. JUVENTUS

After scoring twice against Barcelona, I'm looking for more goals when Juventus come to Old Trafford.



played with an understanding and a composure, allied to fierce determination, that saw us through to this crucial stage of the tournament.

I am not entirely happy with the draw. United would have preferred to play the first-leg in Italy. That way you know precisely what you have to do when you get them on your ground.

The way the Manchester United fans responded when Frank Stapleton and I cracked the Barcelona defence at Old Trafford suggests that we will have the best support in Europe right behind us.

That Barcelona tie in Manchester was my greatest night in Europe. It seems unbelievable but Juventus could give us an opportunity to reproduce that electric atmosphere again.

The game is full of fascinating contests: mine with Platini; Gentile against Norman Whiteside; Collovati and Frank Tardelli and Muhren ...

Confidence is the secret. I have never known morale higher than it is at Old Trafford and I'm confident we will reach the Final even though we are robbed of Ray Wilkins through suspension in the first-leg.

PORTO V. ABERDEEN

Manager Giovanni Trapattoni insists . . .

No fears

JUVENTUS have only one regret about meeting Manchester United in the Semi-Final . . . "We should have met in the Final," says manager Giovanni Trapattoni.

"Everyone in Italy was impressed with the way they eliminated Barcelonas in the Quarter-Final and while United are a good side throughout, they also have some outstanding individuals.

"I was particularly impressed by Bryan Robson, Ray Wilkins, Norman Whiteside and the less spectacular but very effective work done by Remi Moses.

"But we have a few individual stars of our own, as Aston Villa will testify! We knocked them out of the European Cup last season and I think the English people enjoyed our game at Villa Park.

"Paolo Rossi, Michel Platini, Zbigniew Boniek, Marco Tardelli and Claudio Gentile will match United's stars!

"I looked back through our records and recall that we had no problems with United when we last met, in the 1976-77 UEFA Cup.

"They beat us 1-0 at Old Trafford but we won in style, 3-0 in Turin. I don't anticipate such a convincing scoreline in either of these games because this is a very different United side.

"It has strength, skill, courage and is playing to its peak — all very dangerous qualities.

"But we have good experience of ties at this level and I don't have any fear of United."

WHEN we heard the draw at Pittodrie we simply couldn't believe our luck! Now I believe we'll reach the Final!

Our vice-chairman, Mr. Chris Anderson, went over to Zurich to attend the official proceedings and all the talk among the lads was that he must have made the draw himself.

With all due respect to Porto, it's the one we wanted. We're not afraid of either Manchester United or Juventus — but we'd prefer to tackle them in the Final.

The draw is ideal from every angle because the first-leg is over in Portugal and we'll know exactly what we have to do in the return.

Our supporters created just the right atmosphere to help us to victory over Ujpest Dozsa in the Quarter-Final. They really made themselves heard and I think the

MARK McGHEE

Luck of the draw

team responded in just the right way.

We did make life a little hard for ourselves against the Hungarians thanks to a number of missed chances in the first game over there. But even though we went into the match at Pittodrie trailing 2-0, we were totally confident that we could overcome them.

For yours truly it was a marvellous occasion as I celebrated my first European hat-trick.

But it was essentially a team performance — and that's the secret of our success at Pittodrie. It's a case of all for one and one for all and I see no reason why we shouldn't face Porto with complete confidence.

The only real tragedy that I can foresee is that if both ourselves and Manchester United reach the Final, only for UEFA to dig their heels in and insist that the game goes ahead in Switzerland as originally arranged.

Surely, if it's an all-British Final, it would be in everyone's interests to play the game in this country. All the lads at Aberdeen hope we go through to meet United — and I for one would love that clash to take place at Wembley.



Walsh warning!

SCOTTISH clubs don't worry about FC Porto of Portugal, as they proved while knocking Rangers out of this competition in the Second Round.

But they take on holders Aberdeen at home in the first-leg, and the Pittodrie side are rapidly becoming accustomed to and expert at dealing with the two-leg tie.

Former Blackpool, Everton and QPR striker Micky Walsh is the man who takes the weight off European Golden Boot winner Fernando Gomes up front. They are a formidable combination of British strength and Continental guile.

Despite their striking duo, Porto's real strength lies in their defence.



Porto (dark strip) have already accounted for Rangers in this season's Cup-Winners' Cup.



Michel Platini

LIVERPOOL V. DYNAMO BUCHAREST



Final in Rome, May 30th

STAR WRITER
KENNY DALGLISH



Vital goal



DUNDEE UNITED V. ROMA

— DAVIE DODDS

I'VE scored many better goals than the one against Rapid Vienna that gained us a first place in the Semi-Finals of a European competition — but I've a feeling it could yet turn out to be the most important of all.

To be perfectly honest, Derek Stark was having a crack at goal himself but he was off target and it was just an instinctive reaction to divert the ball past the Austrian goalkeeper.

There were only 21 minutes on the clock when that happened and while we knew one goal was enough to see us through we couldn't afford to sit back and relax.

The last ten minutes or so were nerve-wracking. The Austrians hit us with everything but we managed to hang on and had good reason to be grateful for the goal Derek Stark scored in the first-leg in Vienna.

I suppose our presence in the Semi-Finals has raised a few

eyebrows on the Continent, but in all honesty we always fancied our chances of going at least this far.

The two-leg situation suits us fine and my only regret about the draw is that we have to face Roma at Tannadice in the first-leg. But we're ready for them!

I am really looking forward to the experience, although I know all about the Italians' reputation and their man-for-man marking which makes it even more difficult than usual for strikers like myself.

Our top priority will be to stop them sneaking an away goal. We know ourselves how important these can be.

Home banker!

ROMA have a magnificent incentive to overcome Dundee United and reach their first European Cup Final... because it's being held on their home ground!

And a look at some of the Finalists in the past who have received the same advantage will show that Roma need only get there to become red-hot favourites.

Inter Milan met Benfica in the San Siro Stadium for the 1965 Final and despite having long gone off the boil, won 1-0. Barcelona



had the assistance of a 100,000 Spanish crowd in their 'home' Cup-Winners' Cup Final win over luckless Standard Liege in 1952.

In fairness, Roma are a fine side, their skills brilliantly topped off by Brazilian World Cup star Roberto Falcao. They showed their finishing power with a 3-0 home win over Dynamo Berlin in the last round, making a 2-1 defeat in the second-leg easy to swallow.

And with Cerezo, Conti and Pruzzo all supporting Falcao, Roma have tremendous all-round skills and strength.

BRITAIN IN EUROPE

UEFA
CUP

HAJDUK SPLIT V. TOTTENHAM

White HOT Lane

Final first-leg May 9th
second-leg May 23rd

STAR WRITER
GARY
MABBUTT

Goal-shy

THE last time Hajduk Split played hosts to Spurs they received a football lesson, a 2-0 defeat and went on to crash out of the Cup-Winners' Cup on a 6-3 First Round aggregate.

That was back in 1968, and while neither side will contain players involved during that tie, the respect for Spurs remains.

The illustrious Yugoslavian club are one of the most famous in the land, having won no fewer than nine League Championships and the Cup seven times.

Defensively Hajduk are formidable, with Yugoslavia's Player of the Year Zoran Zimovic in goal. But despite the determination of World Cup striker Zlatko Vujovic, they struggle to score goals.



HAJDUK Split of Yugoslavia was the draw everyone at Tottenham wanted.

While no club at this stage of a major European competition can be classed as easy opposition, we would rather meet them than Nottingham Forest or holders Anderlecht, who clash in the other Semi.

We seem to save our best performances for Europe. While we have been inconsistent in the League this season, we have had no fears when playing foreign opposition.

This point was perfectly illustrated when we played our return leg against FK Austria in the previous round.

We lost 1-0 at home to West Bromwich Albion on the previous Saturday, then travelled to Austria and gained a marvellous 2-2 draw, which put us through to the Semis on a 4-2 aggregate score.

It was nice to see Ossie Ardiles score his first goal of the season with a perfectly struck shot that went in off the underside of the bar.

That put us 2-1 up on the night and the Austrians were never going to score another four goals, although they did manage a late consolation equaliser.



From a personal point of view, I was well satisfied because it was only my second game back after a long-lasting injury.

The only reaction I got was a sore throat through shouting myself hoarse during the game!

I am convinced we will get a good result in Yugoslavia and then finish the job off at White Hart Lane in front of our tremendous supporters. What a night that promises to be!

Gary Mabbutt

Tough!

STAR WRITER
BRIAN
CLOUGH



WE are looking forward to facing the holders Anderlecht in the UEFA Cup Semi-Finals... and I only hope we do better than we did the last time we met.

That was in Spain last August when we were taking part in a four-team tournament in Barcelona.

Anderlecht whacked us 4-2 to bring an end to what had been a fairly miserable pre-season in terms of getting results.

We've gone on from there, however, to reach the UEFA Cup Semi-Finals and stay near the top of the First Division while Anderlecht have done exactly the same in Belgium.

Make no mistake, I've seen enough of them already to know they have a lot of pace and skill and I'm absolutely certain we will have our hands full over the two legs.

I remember playing for Sunderland in a friendly with Standard Liege and scoring in the 89th and 90th minutes to give us a 2-1 win.

There were several journalists on the trip and they were all complaining to me about having to re-write their copy.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST V. ANDERLECHT



Wily van Himst

OLDERS Anderlecht will not relinquish their hold on the UEFA Cup easily and their European record is definitely on a par with Forest's, so neither side is likely to gain any psychological advantage before they meet.

Both managers are wily, experienced campaigners and the Belgians are confident that Anderlecht boss, the popular Paul van Himst, is a match for Brian Clough.

Anderlecht, Cup Winners' Cup

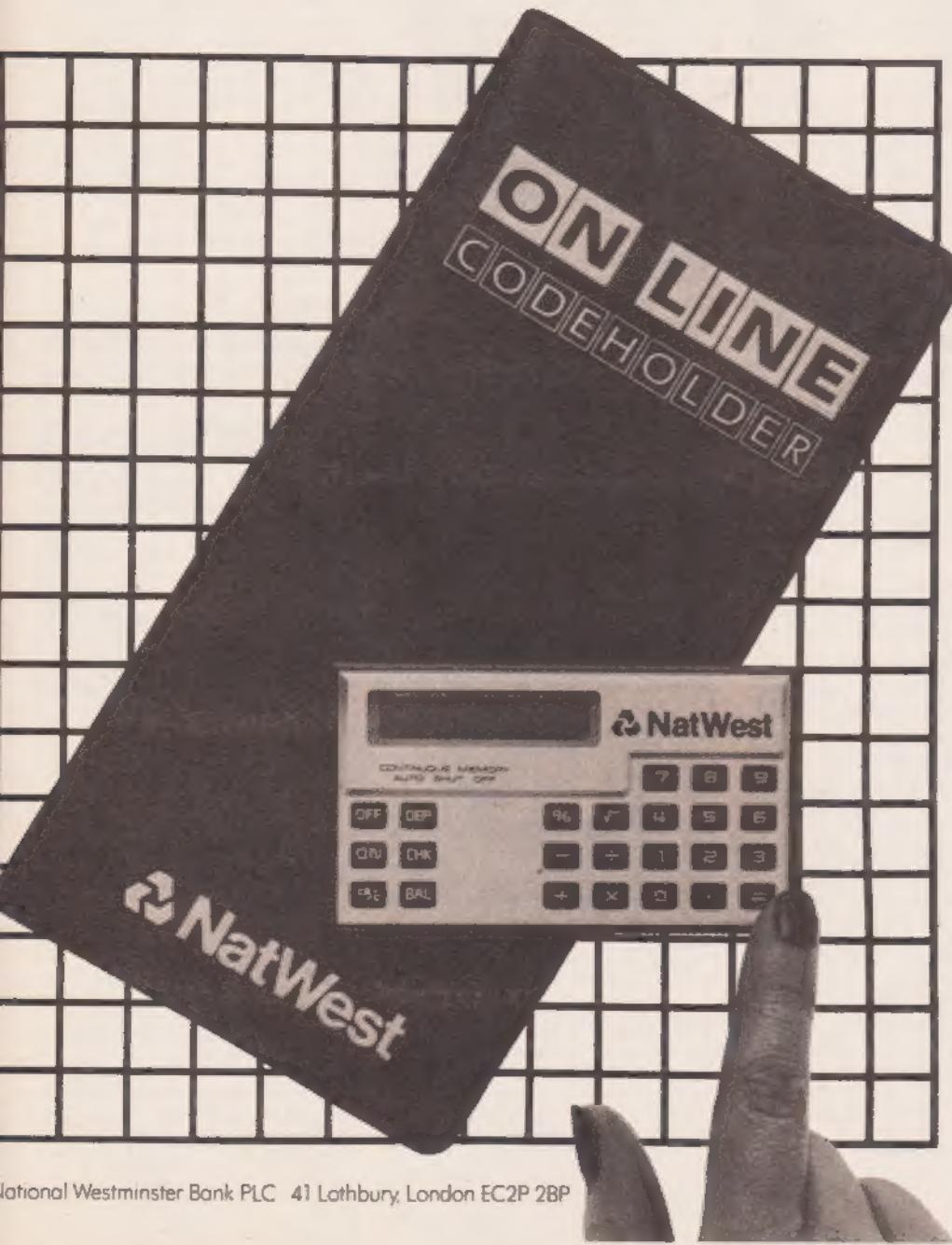
holders in 1976 and 1978, beat Benfica 2-1 on aggregate to lift the UEFA Cup last season.

They've disposed of fellow Belgians Bruges and Russian side Spartak Moscow already this season and with the likes of Vandenberg, Brylle and Arnesen ready to return from injury, Anderlecht pose an all-round threat to a Nottingham Forest team progressing through this term's competition in fits and starts.

Brian Clough

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LIVERPOOL new boy John Wark, subject of a 20-game goal famine at former club Ipswich, is confident he can soon regain his scoring touch for the Anfield outfit.

"I want to get among the goals and help Liverpool win the Championship again," says the 26-year-old Scot. And he adds honestly: "If I can't score a few in this team I might as well pack up!"

Oddly enough, midfield man Wark's last goal for Ipswich, the club he joined straight from school in his native Glasgow 11 years ago, was against Liverpool at Portman Road on November 26.

Ipswich could have done with Wark in scoring form as they plunged into the relegation zone but in the 20 games prior to his £450,000 move to Merseyside he failed to find the opposition net even once.

"I was out of touch, the team wasn't playing that well and it was

before the transfer deadline. Fagan assured Wark that the call was genuine and the player was soon on his way to Merseyside with his wife Toula to discuss the move.

Around 24 hours later he was a Liverpool player and manager Fagan beamed: "I'm delighted we've got him on our side at last. He's been a real pest to us over the years with his goals."

"It was John's goalscoring record that tempted us. He has this ability to score important goals from midfield which will be a tremendous asset to us. But he's also a good all-round player who can tackle well and is good in the air."

At the same time, Ipswich boss

Bobby Ferguson was bemoaning the addition of Wark to a long list of international players who have joined the star trek from Portman Road.

Dutch pair Arnold Muhren and Frans Thijssen, England's Mick Mills and Paul Mariner and Alan Brazil of Scotland have all packed their bags within the last two years and Ferguson admits: "John has gone because we needed the money. It's as simple as that."

Wark, capped 25 times by Scotland but given the cold shoulder since he was placed on the transfer list back in October, sees the move North to Anfield as the ideal opportunity to resurrect his international career.

"Jock Stein said he didn't want to pick me while I was in dispute with Ipswich so now it's up to me to turn in the sort of displays that will attract his attention again."

Wark, who scored 134 goals in 383 senior outings for his former club, joins a strong Scottish colony at Liverpool which includes Graeme Souness, Kenny Dalglish, Alan Hansen, Steve Nicol and Gary Gillespie and cost the club around £2 million to assemble.

PFA Player of the Year in 1981 and Europe's Top Young Player the same year, when he scored 14 of his 36 goals to help Ipswich win the UEFA Cup, Wark could prove to be the final piece of the title jigsaw at Anfield as Liverpool try to hold off main rivals Manchester United and make it a hat-trick of successive League Championships.

But despite the prospect of European Cup football Wark admits: "I'll be keeping my fingers crossed that Ipswich don't go down. I'd hate to see them relegated."

"I see we play them at Anfield on

JUST CHAMPION!

Wark's Liverpool boost



Wark scored just five League goals for Ipswich this season, including this one against Stoke last September.

difficult to get going. I was still giving 100 per cent, like all the lads, but we had some desperate bad luck," he points out.

"In football it seems that when you're down you're really down. When I think of my last few games for Ipswich I can remember some terrible misses up front and some equally tragic mistakes at the back."

"I just hope Ipswich pull clear. I'm sad to be leaving them at a time like this but the move to Liverpool represents a terrific challenge. How could I turn down the chance to join the best club in Europe?"

Ironically, when Wark picked up the phone at his Ipswich home early one Sunday morning and was told Joe Fagan was on the other end he thought it was a joke.

He admits: "This voice said 'Joe Fagan here' and I didn't really believe it was the Liverpool manager. My old Ipswich team-mate Eric Gates was always playing practical jokes and I thought it was him. I nearly said the wrong thing!"

Anxious to reinforce his squad



April 28 and I really hope they're safe by then. I'd hate to do anything to help them on their way into the Second Division, although I'll obviously be doing my best for Liverpool.

"I had nearly 11 happy years at Ipswich and they're a great club. I've left them with no animosity. But I'm excited at the thought of playing for Liverpool—and getting back into the habit of scoring a few goals!"

CUPS SPECIAL NEXT WEEK ...

A behind-the-scenes look
at the clubs chasing glory

- EVERTON'S AMAZING REVIVAL ...
- SAINTS ON THE MARCH ...
- PILGRIMS CAN MAKE HISTORY ...
- WATFORD'S WEMBLEY WAY ...

SCOTTISH CUP

CAN CELTIC
WIN THE CUP?
Semi-Finals
Preview



Be a VIP guest at this year's
F.A. Cup Final — tickets to be
won in a fabulous Robinson's
Barley Water competition.

IN BLAZING COLOUR
ACTION — the stars one step
from Wembley and Hampden
+ Leicester team.

WBA's new boys
Hunt and Grealish

GARY SHAW
secret fear

Focus on Spurs star

OSSIE ARDILES

Newcastle

v

Sheff. Wed.
promotion
crunch!

CRAIG
JOHNSTON

(right) was teacher's pet...
but schooldays weren't
always the happiest for
some of Britain's top
players.



SHOOT — Number One with the players and fans!

FOOTBALL FUNNIES



"Would you mind blowing your
bugle somewhere else?"



"Now this, boys,
is what we call a
football."



"Fancy
telling the kids
they're
Ancient
Roman
goalposts."



"The only good thing about your recent
form is that I've been able to give you a free
transfer."



"The boss
reckons you're
putting it on."



IAN RUSH

THE STARS' CHOICE

Player of the Year
Ian Rush



LIVERPOOL striker Ian Rush might have been out of luck in the Milk Cup Final at Wembley, but he was a clear winner at the annual P.F.A. Dinner a few hours later.

The Welsh wizard was voted the P.F.A. Player of the Year 1984 well clear of his Liverpool team-mate Graeme Souness and third-placed Bryan Robson.

Ian, the player other players most admire, has already topped 35 goals this season.

The Young Player of the Year award went to Luton's exciting striker Paul Walsh.

Liverpool's Steve Nicol was second. Forest's Steve Hodge third.

P.F.A. Merit Award for services to football was presented to former Tottenham manager Bill Nicholson.

Divisional Award Winners

FIRST DIVISION

P. SHILTON (Southampton)
M. DUXBURY (Man. United)
M. LAWRENSON (Liverpool)
A. HANSEN (Liverpool)
K. SANSOM (Arsenal)
B. ROBSON (Man. United)
G. SOUNESS (Liverpool)
G. HODDLE (Spurs)
I. RUSH (Liverpool)
K. DALGLISH (Liverpool)
F. STAPLETON (Man. United)

THIRD DIVISION

D. FELGATE (Lincoln)
G. NISBET (Plymouth)
S. BRUCE (Gillingham)
M. SHOTTON (Oxford)
B. McDONALD (Oxford)
T. HEBBERD (Oxford)
K. BROCK (Oxford)
B. FLYNN (Burnley)
K. EDWARDS (Sheff. Utd.)
B. HAMILTON (Burnley)
C. MORRIS (Sheff. Utd.)

SECOND DIVISION

A. WILLIAMS (Man. City)
M. STERLAND (Sheff. Wed.)
M. McCARTHY (Man. City)
M. LYONS (Sheff. Wed.)
J. JONES (Chelsea)
G. MEGSON (Sheff. Wed.)
J. CASE (Brighton)
T. GREALISH (Brighton—now WBA)
K. DIXON (Chelsea)
K. KEEGAN (Newcastle)
M. HATELEY (Portsmouth)

FOURTH DIVISION

R. JONES (York)
C. PRICE (Hereford)
C. GREENALL (Blackpool)
J. MacPHAIL (York)
S. RICHARDSON (Reading)
I. SNODIN (Doncaster)
J. HARVEY (Hereford)
T. QUOW (Peterboro)
T. SENIOR (Reading)
J. BYRNE (York)
K. WALWYN (York)

Past Winners

Players' Player of the Year

1974 NORMAN HUNTER—Leeds United
1975 COLIN TODD—Derby County
1976 PAT JENNINGS—Tottenham Hotspur
1977 ANDY GRAY—Aston Villa
1978 PETER SHILTON—Nottingham Forest
1979 LIAM BRADY—Arsenal
1980 TERRY McDERMOTT—Liverpool
1981 JOHN WARK—Ipswich Town
1982 KEVIN KEEGAN—Southampton
1983 KENNY DALGLISH—Liverpool

Young Player of the Year

1974 KEVIN BEATTIE—Ipswich Town
1975 MERVYN DAY—West Ham United
1976 PETER BARNES—Manchester City
1977 ANDY GRAY—Aston Villa
1978 TONY WOODCOCK—Nottingham Forest
1979 CYRILLE REGIS—West Bromwich Albion
1980 GLENN HODDLE—Tottenham Hotspur
1981 GARY SHAW—Aston Villa
1982 STEVE MORAN—Southampton
1983 IAN RUSH—Liverpool

Merit Award

1974 BOBBY CHARLTON, C.B.E.
1974 CLIFF LLOYD, O.B.E.
1975 DENIS LAW
1978 GEORGE EASTHAM, O.B.E.
1977 JACK TAYLOR, O.B.E.
1978 BILL SHANKLY, O.B.E.
1979 TOM FINNEY, O.B.E.
1980 Sir MATT BUSBY, C.B.E.
1981 JOHN TROLLOPE, M.B.E.
1982 JOE MERCER, O.B.E.
1983 BOB PAISLEY, O.B.E.

Merit Award winner
Bill Nicholson

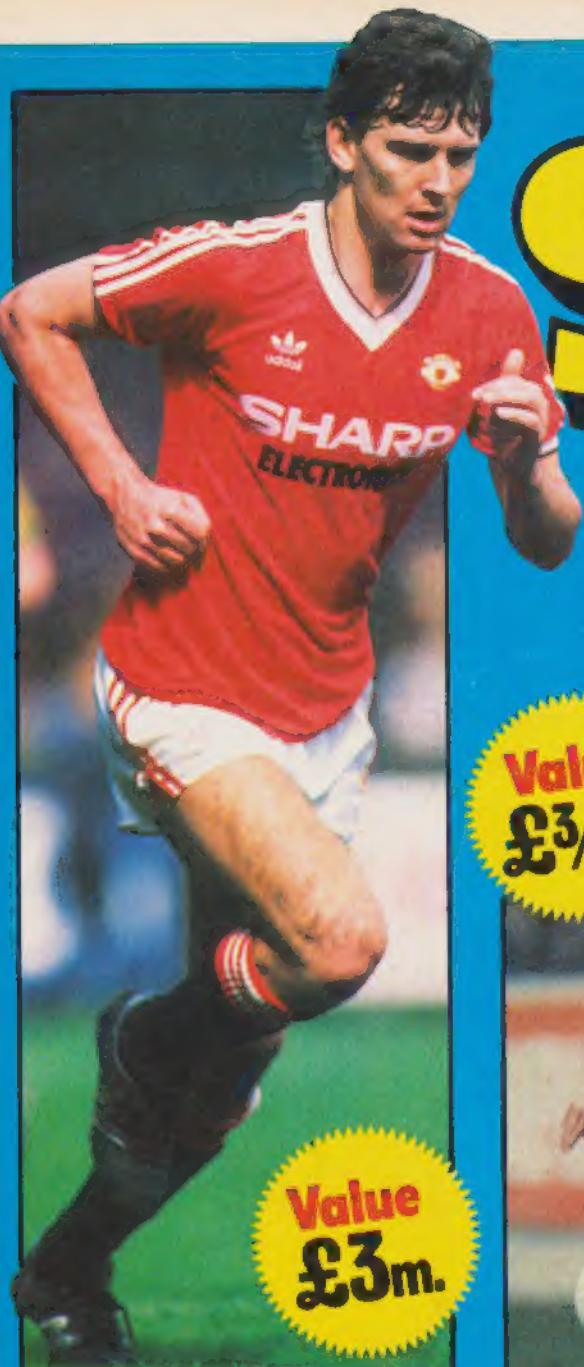


Young Player of the Year
Paul Walsh

STARS

BRITISH clubs are locked in a bitter battle to prevent the cream of our football from being skimmed by wealthy foreign buyers.

Italian, Spanish, Dutch and West German clubs, with budgets no British club can match, are stepping up their campaign to



Value
£3m.

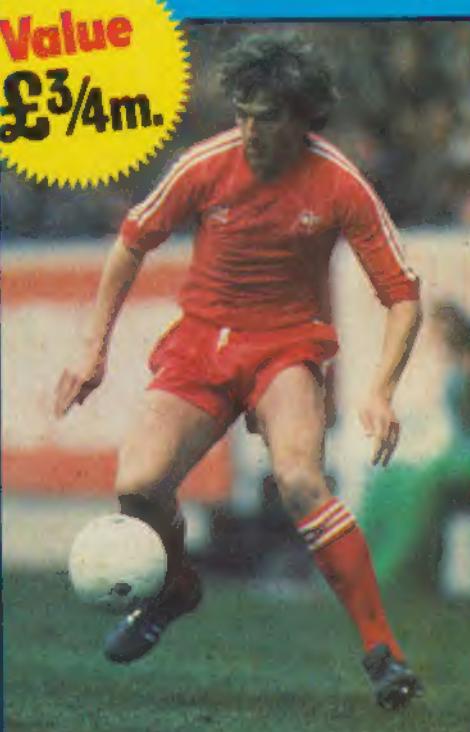
BRYAN ROBSON

(Manchester United)

United's England captain is a versatile midfield player, a natural leader and a player who can defend with tenacity and score goals with a striker's instinct. At 27 he is just the right age to make a move that could set him up financially for life and still have playing years left to return to England.

Chances of leaving: Good.

Interested clubs: Sampdoria, AC Milan and Juventus of Italy, SV Hamburg and Bayern Munich of West Germany.



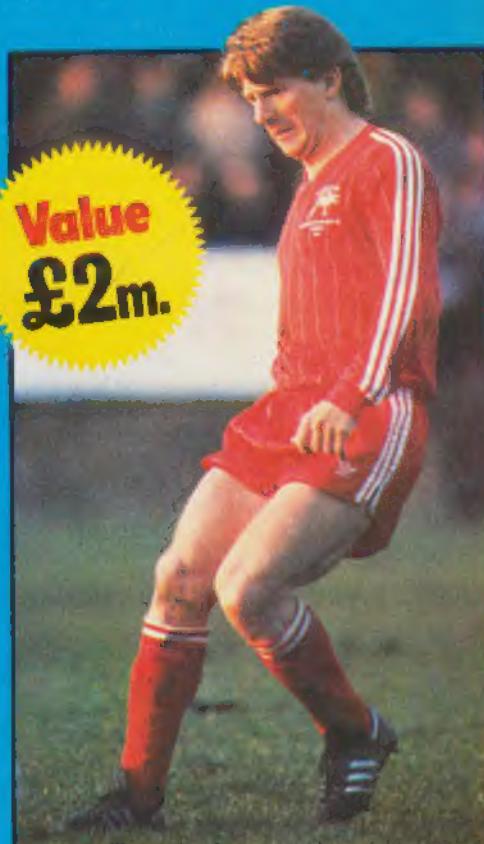
PETER WEIR

(Aberdeen)

Weir's dramatic and exciting wing play during Aberdeen's European triumphs attracted a host of top scouts to Pittodrie, most of whom it was assumed were watching Gordon Strachan! Fast, skilful and direct, Weir is a throwback, a player who attacks defenders and can deliver a telling cross, as European opponents now know.

Chances of leaving: Fair.

Interested clubs: No firm offers to date, but Dutch and West German interest known.



GORDON STRACHAN

(Aberdeen)

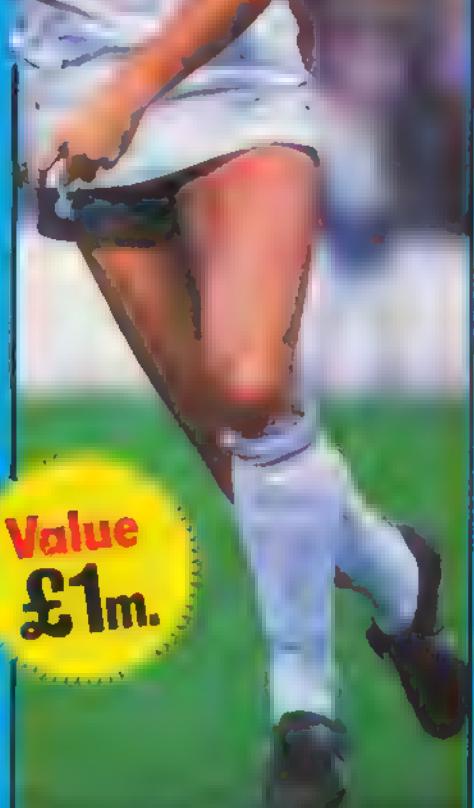
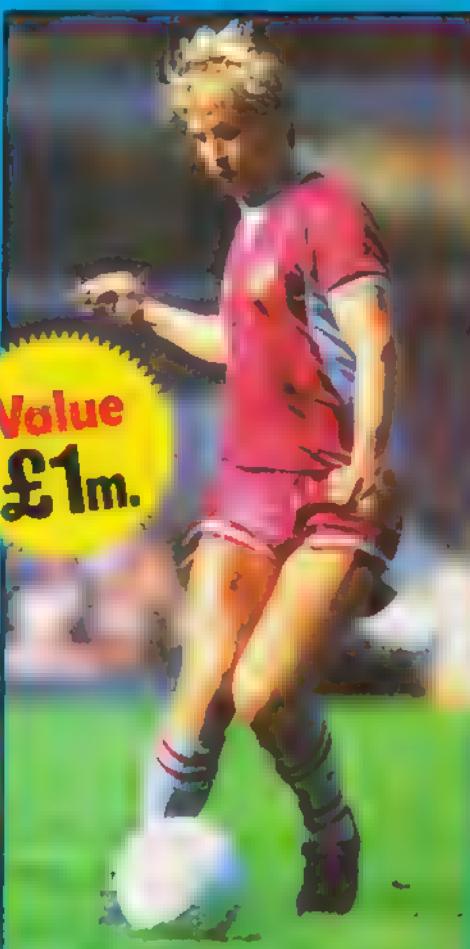
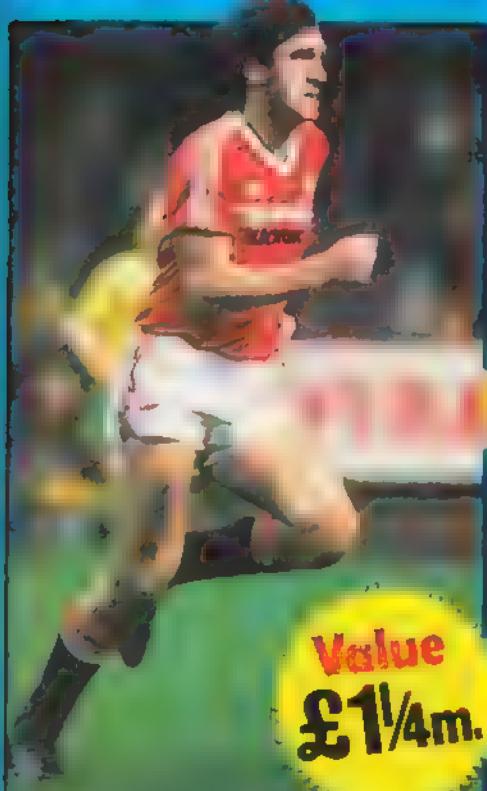
The dynamic little 27-year-old midfield player is tremendously popular abroad, especially since his contribution to Aberdeen's Cup-Winners' Cup triumph in Sweden last season. Starred for Scotland during the '82 World Cup.

Chances of leaving: Good.

Interested clubs: Cologne, PSV Eindhoven and practically every top club in Europe.

WAR

England's best players are leaving to the Continent. Here we look at the prime targets, their current valuations, the probability of them getting out of the clubs who treat them



NORMAN WHITESIDE (Manchester United)

The powerful Northern Ireland international striker was a tremendous success in the 1982 World Cup and helped United win the F.A. Cup last season. Rated more highly abroad than at home because of his strength and could go, and later resume a League career at only 25!

Chances of leaving: Fair.

Interested clubs: AC Milan and Fiorentina of Italy, Valencia of Spain.

Value
£1 1/4m.

GARY SHAW (Aston Villa)

Villa's 22-year-old striker did enough during the club's European Cup and Super Cup wins to impress the foreign scouts. Now injured, but recent form way off his usual beam. Nevertheless, a player of flair and quality. Perhaps a move is on.

Chances of leaving: Fair.

Interested clubs: Real Madrid of Spain, Cologne of West Germany.

GLENN HODDLE (Spurs)

Injuries and erratic form have not helped Hoddle to sustain his initial rating abroad. And his limited impact at England level has cooled a number of clubs who were clamouring for his services in 1982. But Italian clubs believe his style is suited to their game, and Hoddle now agrees! And at 26, Hoddle is young enough to move abroad with his family and emulate Liam Brady.

Chances of leaving: Good.

Interested clubs: Roma and AC Milan of Italy, PSV Eindhoven of Holland.

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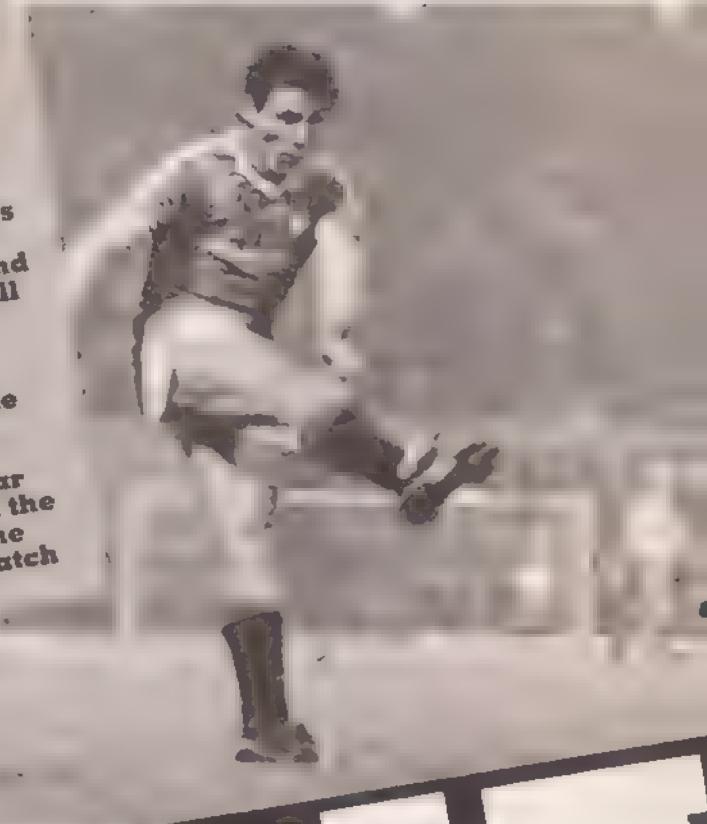
Four defenders choose the

Which marksmen strike most fear into the hearts of defenders when they gain possession of the ball within range of goal?

Ian Rush, of Liverpool, Steve Archibald, of Spurs, Terry Gibson, of Coventry, Leicester's Gary Lineker, Manchester United ace Frank Stapleton and Southampton's Steve Moran all take some beating.

The fans all have their favourites — but who do the players themselves rate as the League's most dangerous goalscorers?

Shoot has talked to four star defenders, one from each of the four divisions, to discover the players they fear most in match action on Saturdays.



Steve Sims is unable to prevent Stapleton cracking his third goal for Manchester United against Watford at Old Trafford

'Not Ian Rush!'

STEVE SIMS
(Watford)

Maybe it sounds surprising when you consider what Ian Rush has done for Liverpool this season, but the player I would pick out as the best I've faced is Manchester United's Frank Stapleton.

For me, Frank comes ahead of Rush because he is just about the complete forward in British football.

He scored a hat-trick against us up at Old Trafford earlier in the season and played ever so well. He always looks a good, complete, old-fashioned type of centre-forward. He leads the line well, is hard working, prepared to put himself about and also takes the knocks.

With Frank, there is no nonsense about making a meal out of a challenge. He gets up and gets on with it, something I have always admired. He has a useful knack of scoring goals, runs hard and finishes well in the air.

But he is probably as good on the ground as he is in the air. You cannot say that about many centre-forwards and that is one of the reasons Frank is so special. He is a very mobile front man and has improved enormously.

He is now a much better player than when he was at Arsenal. There are many strikers around at the moment, a lot of whom are very useful. Garry Birtles certainly comes to mind. But I'd give Frank the edge as the best all-round striker I've seen.



'Old Kev'

MARK SMITH
(Sheffield Wednesday)

The best striker in Division Two this season? It's an easy choice and it's got to be the old fellow ... Kevin Keegan.

Keegan has proved over the past few years what a superb player he is, and he confirmed it when we played Newcastle this season.

Even now, as he prepares for retirement, he is in a different class and could still be doing a good job for the England side.

His little back-heels, flicks and perception make him a top quality player. Sometimes this season he has played further back but when he played up front against us, he looked the best striker we had come across.

He was tremendous face to face. You just don't know what he's going to do next and that surprise

Sheffield Wednesday defender Mark Smith tries to figure out what Keegan will do next during the game at Hillsborough.



Strikers who give them nightmares



MED

The deadliest marksmen

element is a crucial part of his game. He puts himself about, looks for the ball and is always busy, always available.

If the going gets rough, Keegan will never hide. His attitude is first class and he remains a real handful for any defender.

Whenever he got the ball against us, he looked dangerous. For a guy who is now 33, he still has great sharpness off the mark and that, of course, is a tribute to the fitness he retains.

I suppose if you have achieved all he has done in the last 12 years, it would be easy to lose some of that sharpness. But he still looks the sharpest striker we've seen this season and that's a terrific comment on a fine footballer.

'Big Bill'

BOBBY McDONALD
(Oxford United)

Perhaps it's not surprising that the man who sticks in my memory has already won 28 international caps for his country since 1978. And he's only playing in the Third Division!

It's Burnley's Billy Hamilton, clearly the most dangerous striker

we have run across this season. He is a real threat to us, and I didn't realise he was so big until we played Burnley earlier in the season.

He's a well-built lad and he makes full use of it. Surprisingly, a lot of tall players don't jump all that well and therefore don't make the best use of their potential. But Hamilton does.

He is a really good player. He's strong, he's tall and clever with it. He has fair touch on the ball and scored against us, too, just to show his worth.

In fact, we played Burnley three times before February and he got two goals in those games. When he scored those goals, we were very much on top in each match and Billy (below) took the chance very effectively to knock us out of our stride. Having a striker who can score in a sudden breakaway is invaluable.

'Tough Tony'

MARTIN HICKS
(Reading)

My choice from Division Four has got to be Colchester's Tony Adcock. He has already convinced an awful lot of defenders in this division that he merits a place in a side of far higher standing.

It's impossible to say he can go

His finishing was magnificent and he is a thorn in any defence's side. His bravery means you can never discount him.

Sadly, Kevin Reeves is now out for the rest of the season, because Hamilton had formed a very useful partnership with him this season.



all the way and become a success over a period of time in the First Division. But he could certainly step straight into Second Division football and do well.

Adcock (above) has a good build, is strong on the ball and therefore very difficult to push off it. He also has a footballing brain.

A lot of strikers you play against in this division do the same things all the time but Adcock is different.

He is good in the air, too, but perhaps his greatest attribute is that he seems to have a sixth sense about where to go for the goals. That ability will serve him well in his career.

I would like to mention one other guy, York City striker Keith Walwyn, who comes a very close second to Adcock in my book. He isn't particularly quick but looks after himself well and is a dangerous customer. Perhaps he loses out to Adcock because he doesn't have the pace.

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THE

A TEAM

Manager

For team leader, who else but Ron 'Hannibal' Atkinson? Smooth talking, positive thinking Atkinson is perfect for the role. The mastermind behind Manchester United's push for honours in the 80's, Ron believes *nothing* is beyond him or his team, and he aims to prove it.

Goalkeeper

Rddy Avramovic (Coventry). He may be out of favour with Bobby Gould right now, but the Yugoslav international is an accomplished performer when on guard between the sticks.

Full-backs

Viv Anderson (Nottingham Forest) and Arthur Albiston (Manchester United). Both have carried the flag of their respective countries with distinction. They love to make sorties into enemy territory, but can stand as firm defensively as the next man when their backs are against the wall.

Central Defenders

Reuben Agboola (Southampton) and Sam Allardyce (Coventry). Agboola may only be 21, but he's no rookie when it comes to handling trouble. Been sweeping up with remarkable calm and

HANNIBAL, B.A., The Face and Murdock — The A-Team — have been thrilling the nation as television's fearless soldiers of fortune. Never afraid to take on anyone, anywhere, and always coming out on top.

They set Shoot thinking. Maybe we could come up with our own A-Team, the surname of each player beginning with the letter A. A multi-national force of First Division stars who, like their TV counterparts, would be more than a match for anyone...

assurance for Saints this season. No doubt about the iron man of the team. Sam 'B.A.' Allardyce can be every bit as fearsome as big B.A. Baracus when he's out there on the park. There aren't many forwards around who could make a sucker out of him.

Midfield

Ian Atkins (Sunderland), Paul Allen (West Ham), Ossie Ardiles (Spurs) and David Armstrong (Southampton). Atkins and Allen rarely seem to get mentioned in

dispatches, but they're a couple of true pros — busy as beavers and always at the opposition's throat. Ossie Ardiles has just got to be 'The Face' in our team. Exactly like his TV counterpart, the little Argentinian is an operator who's as smooth as silk. Never ruffled under fire, his calmness and precision can always be relied upon. Meanwhile David Armstrong might look an old campaigner, but don't be fooled into thinking his disappearing hair makes him a veteran. That's just a camouflage. He'll work and run all

day for his comrades, then snipe a goal when it's least expected.

Attack

Steve Archibald (Spurs) and Trevor Aylott (Luton). Archibald gets our vote for the tag of 'Murdock'. Maybe he's not such an eccentric, but Steve's a real explosives expert in front of goal. His scoring ability makes him dynamite in the opposition's danger zone. Trevor Aylott is more than capable of supplying the fire-power in the air. At 6' 1½" he would provide an aerial bombardment to test the strongest of defences.

Substitute

Clive Allen (QPR). Somewhat battle scarred of late, but with the skill to come in at a moment's notice and not let the team down.

So there you have it — soccer's A TEAM

Manager Ron Atkinson
 1 — Rddy Avramovic
 2 — Viv Anderson
 3 — Arthur Albiston
 4 — Reuben Agboola
 5 — Sam Allardyce
 6 — Ian Atkins
 7 — Paul Allen
 8 — Ossie Ardiles
 9 — Steve Archibald
 10 — Trevor Aylott
 11 — David Armstrong
 Sub Clive Allen

FOR most clubs a place in the top half of the First Division — and reaching the Milk Cup Semi-Finals — would mean a successful season. For Aston Villa it is bordering on failure.

And that, in a nutshell, is the reason why Tony Barton could be doomed to join the ranks of unemployed soccer managers this summer.

Barton, the mild-mannered former chief scout who took over from Ron Saunders two years ago, has been under more and more pressure this season. And even his status along with Brian Clough as the only current First Division managers to have won the European Cup may not protect him.

Barton's team has stuttered through an inconsistent season as a pale shadow of the side which beat Bayern Munich 1-0 in Rotterdam in May, 1982 to lift Europe's most coveted club prize.

And the Villa manager has suffered even further from comparisons with the team which lifted the League Championship under the guidance of Ron Saunders in 1981.

That Saunders, with no money or resources and a squad full of free transfer players, has created a promising team at neighbouring Birmingham City has only served to increase the pressure for results coming from the Villa Park.

And it's not just among the

crowd where Barton has felt the tension — his chairman Doug Ellis has already given a blunt warning that "Villa will not tolerate consistent failure."

Their exit from the Milk Cup Semi-Finals after a two-legged defeat by Everton only served to fuel speculation that chairman Ellis, who owns more than 40 per cent of the club's shares, could be ready to find a new boss.

Villa's chairman, a self-made millionaire with a reputation as a tough businessman, would be likely to go for a "big name" boss with an established reputation.

Former Arsenal manager Terry Neill is a name frequently linked with Villa — and don't rule out Tommy Docherty, who was boss



BARTON'S One man's fight to keep his job

during Ellis' last spell as chairman.

So what has happened to the team which was proudly crowned Champions of Europe less than two years ago? Four of them have left the club — Jimmy Rimmer, Ken McNaught, Kenny Swain and Tony Morley. And there's the first clue to Villa's problems.

All four players were among the highest wage earners — and with Villa £1.8 million in debt, Barton has been under pressure to reduce the wage bill.

So Rimmer went to Swansea, Swain to Nottingham Forest, and McNaught and Morley to neighbouring WBA.

Available

Villa's young side might have been shorn of even more experience — because at one stage Dennis Mortimer and Des Bremner were both made available for offers.

Barton has been given cash to spend to rebuild his side — and last summer splashed out £300,000 on Steve McMahon and £200,000 on Paul Rideout. A few months earlier he bought Alan Curbishley from Birmingham for £100,000. Last month, another £200,000 was spent on Brighton defender Steve Foster.

Yet although they have proved their potential, so far the new look Villa have failed to strike any measure of consistency.

Perhaps the most damning statistic of their season has been the dreadful form away from home — with only two wins in the League

Steve McMahon (left) was signed from Everton in the summer and was part of the Villa team beaten by his former club in this season's Milk Cup Semi-Final (right).

away from Villa Park by the end of March.

Even skipper Allan Evans admits that the hunger to win which drove the team to European Cup glory has dimmed.

"I think that possibly is a fair criticism," he admits. "Probably it's because as results go wrong it tends to affect people's confidence. The players have to realise that it's down to them — it's only a matter of battling through the bad times, and it will start to come right again."

"If you wanted the biggest difference between this side and the one which took the European Cup it's in midfield — and that's mainly because we have been missing the influence of the injured Gordon Cowans."



"It's through him that we make a lot of our build-ups — he's the type of player who can change the direction of play with one brilliant pass."

"We haven't got the midfield linking with the front men in the way we used to. We used to get Gordon, Dennis Mortimer and Des Bremner in front of the forwards to collect little flicks and knock-ons. Now I feel it's only Dennis that's doing it consistently."

"That's not meant as any criticism of Alan Curbishley and Steve McMahon — they simply haven't got used to playing that way. But until they start doing it from a defender's point of view it means you can't hit the same sort of passes to the front — and a lot of our attacking suddenly dies."

It's not only the injury to Cowans which has caused Villa problems. They also lost Gary Shaw for the first half of the season because of a cartilage operation.

Even so, there should be enough players of quality in Villa's squad to survive the setbacks. After all, the last balance sheet showed 11 of them being paid £1,000 a week ~~£1,000~~.

And Evans insists: "I'm fed up with reading about a crisis. Our ability and potential is not in any doubt — it's only a matter of everybody working together and I'm sure the good times can't be far away again."

LAST STAND

Ken McNaught (stripes, left) was sold to WBA in an effort to reduce Villa's crippling wage bill

'GIVE ME A CHANCE' pleads Villa boss

DEFIANT Tony Barton believes his Villa team can silence the critics — by winning a trophy next season.

And while speculation about his future as manager continues, he goes as far as to promise: "Barring major injury problems I expect Villa to win something next season."

That's a bold claim from a man who has watched Villa struggle to find any consistency this season — and at times blasted his younger players for lack of commitment.

But he insists: "Perhaps I am putting my head on the chopping block by making a promise of success — but I think that in this game you have to be prepared to back your judgment."

"I don't believe in hiding behind anything. I believe that we are doing things in the right way, and if you are involved in anything you have to be ready to stand up for what you think is right."

"I thought this season we had

the potential to win something — but I didn't know whether we could live up to the potential."

"For next season, if I'm given the chance, I would expect success."

"Paul Rideout and Steve McMahon will be better players for the experience they have had with us. And Allan Evans will have had experience as skipper and learned a little more how to carry the captaincy."

"We should have Gordon Cowans back and fit again, and the likes of Dennis Mortimer and Des Bremner will still be pushing to keep their places."

"We've got one of the best young goalkeepers in the country — and he will have completed a full season in the First Division. And I also believe that in Gary Williams and Colin Gibson we have the best two full-backs in the First Division."

"Added to that, if I feel I need to strengthen the squad in any way in the summer I will certainly try to do so."

Barton's Record

(Appointed Feb 1982)

Season	League position	F.A.	Cup record	Euro	UEFA
1981-82	11th			Won	—
1982-83	6th	6th Rnd	2nd Rnd	Q/F	—
1983-84	8th				
	(at 30.3.84)	3rd Rnd	8/F	—	2nd Rnd

Age: 40, born Sutton, Barton played for Fulham, Nottm. Forest and Portsmouth as right winger. Coached Portsmouth, then coach, chief scout and assistant manager at Villa before taking over on Feb 9, 1982 from Ron Saunders.





OXFORD manager Jim Smith is convinced that the signing of former England defender Colin Todd will prove to be the final piece in his promotion jigsaw.

Todd, capped 27 times by England during the 70's, arrived at the Manor Ground from Nottingham Forest on a free transfer. He only has a contract until the end of the season, but if he can help them out of the Third Division will almost certainly be offered a new 12-month contract in the summer.

shrewd in coming to difficult decisions. Jim has done one heck of a job at Oxford. They were unlucky to miss out on promotion last season; this time, they've given their supporters tremendous excitement in Cup campaigns. But, above all, it has to be success in the League as Oxford's target.

"I think there comes a point where supporters, no matter how much they have been excited by epic Cup victories, start to feel uneasy about it affecting chances in the League."

"With hindsight, it may prove that Oxford

TODD'S TARGET

Smith has already earned a winning reputation this season by helping Oxford to success in both the Milk Cup and F.A. Cup as well as a clear lead in the Third Division.

Now he is convinced the cool authority of Todd will steer Oxford safely through the pressures of the final weeks of the season.

"Colin has experience, composure, direction and leads by example. In fact, he has everything you look for in a professional," says Smith.

It is second time around for the Smith-Todd partnership. Smith paid Everton £300,000 for the defensive expertise of Todd in 1979 — and that was a crucial move in taking Birmingham out of the Second Division.

"This is my first time in the Third and I hope it will be the briefest of stays," says Todd. "I know that I'll enjoy the challenge of playing for Jim Smith just as much as I did last time."

"He always wants his side to play football. He allows players to have their say even if they don't always get their way with him. He is also

went out of the Cups at just about the right time. Afterwards, they wobbled a bit in the Third Division programme but now I believe they are through that time of uncertainty."

"I was reasonably satisfied with my form for Oxford in my first few matches after signing from Nottingham Forest — but, equally, I know that I can do very much better. It's all a question of building up match sharpness."

"I lost my place in the Forest side because of being injured. That was three months ago, during that time, the side put together some brilliant results. Brian Clough could not give me back my place in that situation and it was no good to me being out of the team."

"Now joining Oxford has given me a new target to aim for. In the past, the Third Division was not noted for its standard of football but that has changed in recent seasons."

"In fact, Oxford are setting the pace because of the quality of their football — and that suits me down to the ground."

TIPS FROM THE TOP

MICHEL PLATINI
Juventus and France



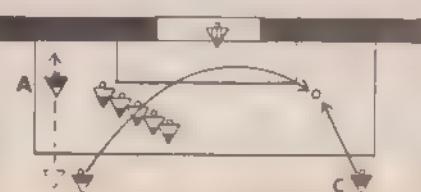
IN THE FIRING LINE

No player frightens opponents more than France skipper Michel Platini when he is about to take a free kick. The powerful accuracy of Platini's shooting is demonstrated in the diagram. Platini has positioned a team-mate in the wall. The second he makes contact with the ball his team-mate squats, allowing Platini's shot to pass over his head to beat an unsuspecting 'keeper.



SLEIGHT OF FOOT

There are times when Platini will line up with a team-mate with both preparing to take the free-kick. Player A runs over the ball and races forward as if expecting a through pass from Platini. With the wall's eyes on A, Platini lobbs the ball over for Player C to run on to and blast at goal.

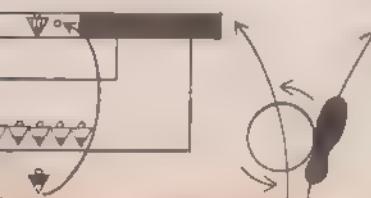


SIDE-FLICK HEADER

Notice how often Platini uses a side flick header to score. He uses his neck muscle to strike the ball a powerful blow with the side of his forehead. His secret is to re-create the simple action employed when flicking away hair which has fallen into your eyes.

BANANA KICK

There is no one better at the banana-kick than Platini. Although it's possible to get an exaggerated bend by striking the ball with the outside of the foot, Platini — when he requires slide-rule accuracy — uses the inside of his foot. It's a more unnatural kick, but the boot stays longer on the ball.





CHELSEA are on the verge of repaying the loyalty of their remarkable fans by recapturing the First Division status they lost back in 1979.

Stamford Bridge is beginning to resound to the type of atmosphere that made Chelsea the place to be during the 1970's.

And even the prospect of a live TV game between Southampton and Liverpool did not deter Chelsea fans from leaving manager John Neal open-mouthed with astonishment as 18,905 of them poured on to the terraces for the home game against Blackburn on Friday, March 16.

"Those fans are part of the reason we are challenging for promotion," says Neal.

"I am delighted for them because many of them followed us through the dark hours of last



It's Amazing

CHELSEA'S GLORY CHARGE

CLUB SPOTLIGHT



season when we had to fight like hell to stay out of Division Three."

Chelsea's astonishing transformation is largely due to Neal's courage and determination, and the faith shown in him by dynamic chairman Ken Bates.

Given the chance to build his own side, Neal got rid of a host of players, brought in nearly a whole new team and gave them the opportunity to play attacking football.

"It's truly amazing when you think about it," says Neal, "because I expected that we'd need half a season for so many new boys to adjust. But if I had

Tough-tackling full-back Joey Jones.

signed two or three new lads it would have probably been more difficult than actually buying a new side, which is what I've done.

"They have the ability and our fans have the passion and love for the club to drive us forward. It's a magical combination."

The Chelsea line-up is a mixture of youth and experience, with old heads such as Welsh international full-back Joey Jones and converted striker Colin Lee at the back and young Pat Nevin and Kerry Dixon up front.

Nevin's wing skills, Dixon's finishing and the persistent chance-grabbing of David Speedie are three reasons why Chelsea have surged forward again after a lean spell mid-season. But Mickey Thomas is most certainly responsible for adding a new dimension to the team.

"Yes, we were beginning to get a bit stale," admits Neal: "and it was at that point in the season that I brought in Mickey Thomas from Stoke.

"I cannot praise this lad enough. He is a marvellous pro, full of enthusiasm, positive

attitudes and ability. He has vision, pace, tenacity, inexhaustable energy and can score excellent goals.

"I believe Mickey's arrival was just the tonic we needed and he certainly made the type of home debut you dream of with two goals against, of all sides, promotion rivals Sheffield Wednesday in a crucial 3-2 win."

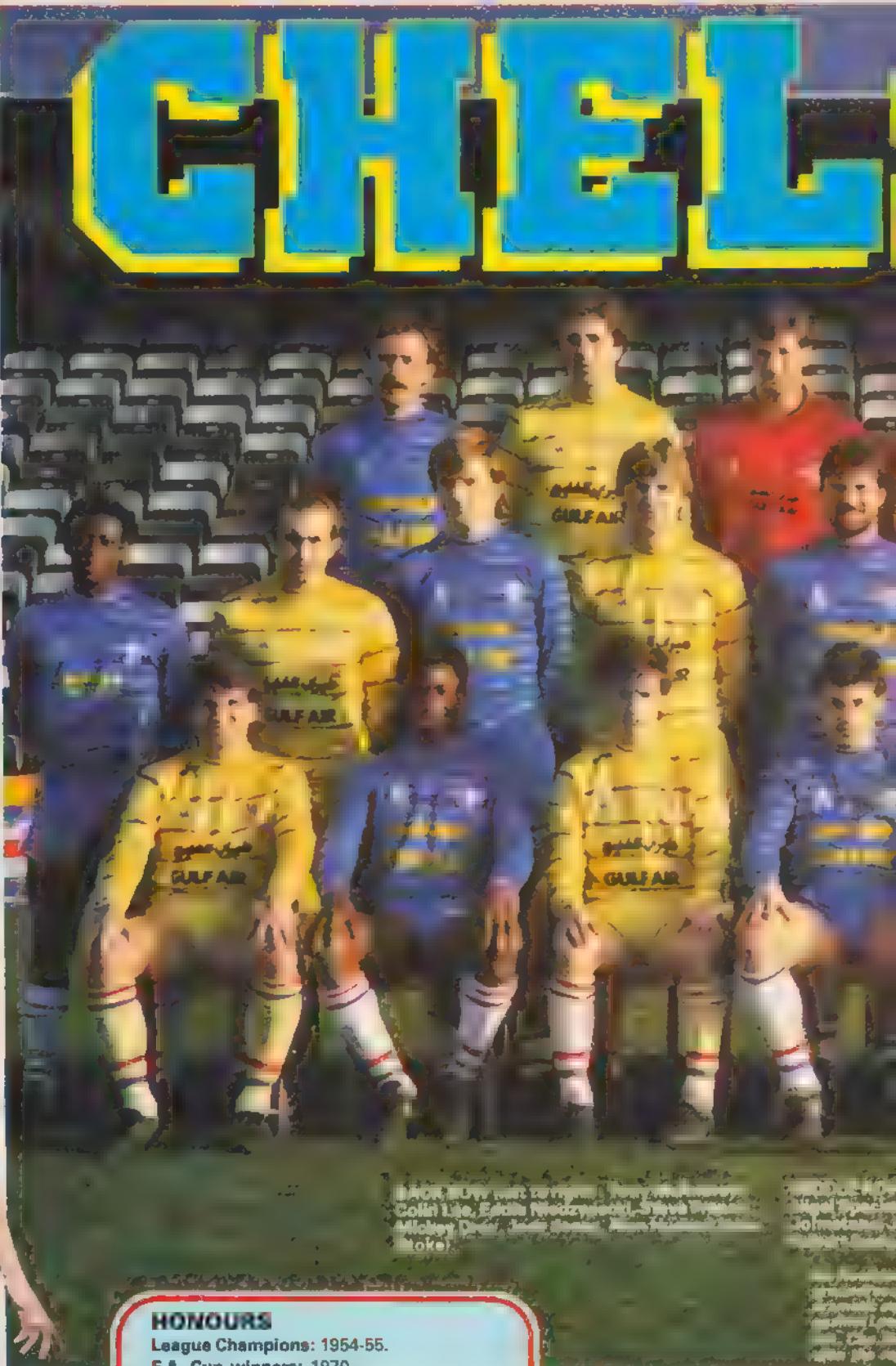
Neal is not interested in talking about the players he cleared out of Stamford Bridge, preferring to discuss the new-look Chelsea, all dash, verve and confidence.

"We'll hit some sticky patches between now and May," says Neal: "but we have the players to overcome such games. You have to accept that once you set out your stall to be top, other sides will raise their game and make you sweat.

"We want to play with style and entertain people as well as win promotion. So far we're on course on both counts. Now it's up to us to sustain the effort and give one of the most loyal crowds in the game what they deserve — a First Division team."



Pat Nevin



HONOURS

League Champions: 1954-55.
F.A. Cup winners: 1970.
League Cup winners: 1964-65.
European Cup-Winners' Cup winners: 1970-71.

Record Transfer Fee Paid: £225,000 to Celtic for David Hay in July, 1974.
Record Transfer Fee Received: £825,000 from Manchester United for Ray Wilkins in August, 1979.
Most League goals: Bobby Tambling — 164 (1958-70).
Most League appearances: Ron Harris — 655 (1962-80).

1983-84

MILK CUP
Gillingham (a)
Gillingham (h)
Leicester (a)
Leicester (h)
WBA (h)

2-1 (Walker, Dixon)
4-0 (Dixon 4)
2-0 (Dixon, Canovi)
0-2 (won 4-3 on pe)

F.A. CUP
Blackburn (a)

0-1

SHOOT!



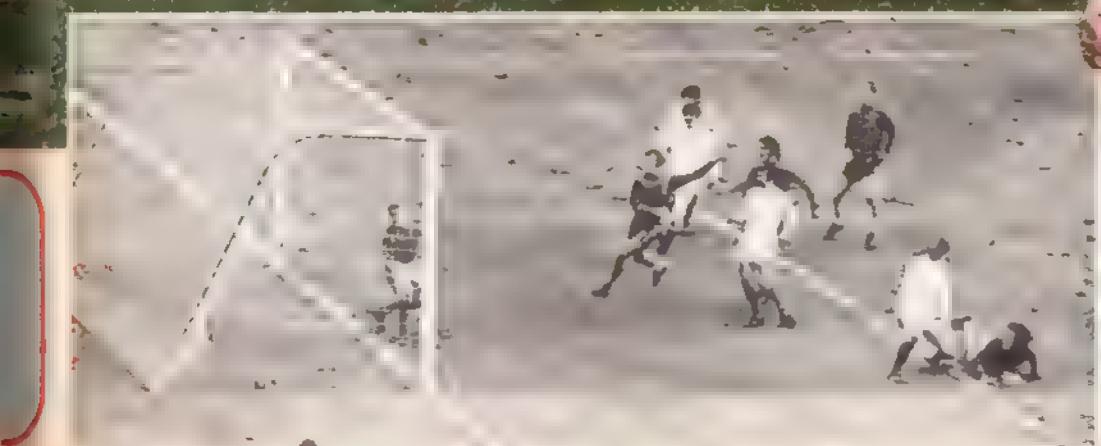
Clive Walker,
Peter, Derek,
Stephen, Duncan Shearer
Mike, John Bumstead

FRONT ROW: Martin, (now) Kertie Dublin, Pat
Nevin, Leo Donnellan, John Hollins, David
Speedie, Dale Jesper, Peter Rhoades-Brown
(now Oxford)



Mickey Thomas

SHOOT!



MEMORY



Transfers

1. Sandy Clark of Rangers and Brian Whittaker of Celtic (on ground) joined their clubs during this season. Name their former sides.

2. Mark Grew was transferred from Leicester to which other First Division club on March 22nd, the deadline day for transfers?

3. Another player on the move the same day was the brother of Stoke City and England international Mark Chamberlain. What is his Christian name and which two clubs were involved in the loan deal?

4. Former Arsenal and Everton star Trevor Ross is playing for which Third Division club following his transfer from AEK Athens in January?

Final Link

Ricky Villa (Tottenham, below), Gordon Hill (Manchester United), John Devine (Arsenal) and Roger Osborne (Ipswich Town) share a distinction in the F.A. Cup Final... what is it?



TEST

BY
JOHN HAMON

Goalkeepers

1. Who keeps goal for (a) Dundee United and (b) Aberdeen?
2. Is it true that Mark Wallington began his League career with Stoke City before moving to Leicester?
3. Southampton's Peter Shilton made his full International debut for England against East Germany in 1971. Did England win 3-1, 4-1 or 5-1?
4. This goalkeeper (left) plays in the First Division for which club?



Identity Parade

Here are three players who have established themselves in the First Division this season. Read the clues and then see if you can identify them.

1. A youngster who is making a name for himself at Birmingham City as an exciting midfield player.
2. A star defender for Sunderland.
3. While his club Ipswich Town have struggled this lad has been producing some fine performances.

What happened next?

Study the action photograph, taken during Scotland's clash with Russia in the 1982 World Cup Finals, and see if you know what happened next.



ANSWERS ON PAGE 34

Joining Saints - right move for Mark

Mark Wright is a player who quickly impresses people.

He played so well in his first ten games for home town club Oxford that Southampton willingly paid £125,000 to prevent other interested big clubs moving in.

Now he's on the fringes of the senior England team and has been a key figure in Southampton's run to the F.A. Cup Semi-Finals.

He's a stylish, unflapable central defender who looks like playing an important role for England in the search for a place in the 1986 World Cup Finals.

Wright is a genuine lad off the park, too. He says: "I was only



thinking about keeping my place in the Oxford team when Southampton came in for me.

"I was so excited about the prospect of a First Division team wanting me that I went off and signed for Saints the same day. Then when I got back to Oxford, I was told that Manchester United were also interested.

"I thought I'd made a terrible mistake, rushing in like that. But it's turned out to be the best move I could have made. At a big club like Manchester United, I doubt if I'd ever have got a chance in the first team."

Southampton manager Lawrie McMenemy told Wright that he'd be lucky to get in the reserve team at The Dell. But injuries meant an almost instant first team spot when Wright arrived in the spring of 1982 and his talent helped him to overcome a difficult beginning.

Wright says: "After playing a few games towards the end of 1981/82, I found myself involved in a terrible start to the following season."

"We were hammered 6-0 by Spurs, 5-0 by Liverpool and 4-1 by Watford. I thought it was going to be a short run to my first team

"But we had a few other youngsters in the side who were trying to find their way. And even the experienced players were having a bad time. Anyway, the manager kept faith with us and eventually we started to get things right."

Tightest

Southampton's defence has become one of the tightest in Division One since they started using a sweeper system.

Also, they've got Peter Shilton. Mark Wright reckons that, at club and international level, it's a tremendous asset to have Shilton as a colleague.

Wright says: "He's an absolute perfectionist. He honestly believes that opposing forwards should never get a shot on goal. The defender who lets such a thing happen knows that he'll get a fearful rolicking from Shilton."

"Shilton never stops talking during a game, either. His advice is nearly always spot on but at times, you're inspired to play well just to stop him nagging."

"On our day, I now think we're one of the best sides in the country. Lawrie McMenemy is always impressing on us that we needn't be afraid of the Liverpools and Manchester Uniteds of this world and we're beginning to believe it."

"We may not have the strength in depth of those clubs but we can outplay them when we're on song and they know it."

"We proved in front of a live TV audience the other week just how good we can be when we beat Liverpool 2-0 at The Dell."

"I think the Championship is beyond us now, but we've still got the F.A. Cup and I'm really looking forward to next week's Semi-Final against Everton at Highbury."

"Even with Manchester United going so well in the League and in Europe, I don't regret my move to Southampton. I love it here."

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Barnes' hat-trick

What is the greatest number of successful penalty-kicks one player has taken in an English First Division game?

MARTIN VOSKA,
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

• Three it is, Martin, and it's happened three times

The successful hat-trick spot-kickers were Billy Walker (Aston Villa v Bradford City on 12th November, 1921); Charlie Mitten (Manchester United v Aston Villa on 8th March, 1960); and Ken Barnes (Manchester City v Everton on 7th December, 1957).

Martin Peters

How many games did Martin Peters play for England, and which were his first and last? How many goals did he score?

BRYN SMITH,
DRIPPSHOT

• Peters made his full international debut in a 2-0 Wembley win over Yugoslavia on 4th May, 1966.

His 67th, and last, was in a 2-0 Hampden defeat by Scotland on 18th May, 1974.

In these games, Peters scored 20 goals — including one in the victorious 1966 World Cup Final.

Dad's honours

As Gary Bailey is one of my favourites, I'd like to know if his father won any top honours?

ADRIETTE RIET,
HOLLAND

• Like his son, Roy Bailey was also a goalkeeper, Adriette — with Ipswich and Crystal Palace in the 1950's and 1960's.

With the former, he gained a League Championship medal in 1961-62 following a Second Division medal the season before.

SHORT PASSES

• Joe Corrigan gained nine full caps for England between 1975-76 and 1981-82.

(ELENDE EZE, Nigeria)

• Manchester City were League Champions in 1936-37, and relegated to the Second Division at the end of the following season.

(PETER KRAFEL, Australia)

• The oldest club in the Football League is Notts County, founded in 1862. Neighbours Nottingham Forest were founded in 1865.

(ROGER HASANOV, Sweden)

• First British club to win the European Cup was Celtic in 1967. Manchester United's success came the following year.

(SETIA SIBAU, Brunei)

Reid sends Aberdeen 'keeper Jim Leighton the wrong way for Celtic's League Cup Semi-Final winner at Parkhead.

SAVED! The Celtic outcast

SCOTTISH Under-21
defender Mark Reid has
finally emerged from the
shadows at Parkhead.

And ironically, the quiet-spoken Ayrshire lad has made the breakthrough in the season he thought might be his last with Celtic.

"When Celtic signed Brian Whittaker from Partick Thistle earlier in the season, the message was loud and clear," says Reid.

"They paid £50,000 in cash plus winger John Buckley for the Firhill left-back and, obviously, they weren't spending that for a reserve.

"Brian is a class player and I realised I had a real fight on my hands for that number three shirt."

Reid, a 'tidy' player rather than a spectacular one, set about climbing his own personal Everest with a refreshing zest.

Whittaker came into the first team, but because he wasn't signed before the European deadline had to be left out of the UEFA Cup-ties against Aarhus, Sporting Lisbon and Nottingham Forest.

And it was in the testing atmosphere of those tricky European games that Reid fought his way back into manager Davie Hay's first team plans and saved his career.

"No one is guaranteed a first team place at Parkhead," says Hay. "Everyone realises that. I don't play favourites."

Reid took those words to heart and buckled down to the task ahead.

Whittaker lost form, Reid was re-introduced... and he's been there ever since, playing with consistency and class.

The upsurge in confidence of Reid was evident when Celtic were awarded a penalty in their tense, finely-balanced League Cup Semi-Final with Aberdeen at Parkhead last month.

It was 0-0 on the day and the aggregate was identical when Celtic were given a spot-kick shortly after the interval. Aberdeen players argued against the award after Tommy Burns had been felled by Dougie Bell.

The place was in uproar, there was the usual gamesmanship, but, in the midst of it all, Reid stayed completely calm.

Holdtite

Faced with international 'keeper Jim Leighton, Reid didn't hesitate as he stepped forward to send the Aberdeen goalie the wrong way for the only goal of the game.

A week later Celtic slaughtered Motherwell 6-0 in the Quarter-Finals of the Scottish Cup... and again it was Reid who started the ball rolling by scoring the opening goal.

"Getting goals is all very nice," he says, "but my main duty is in defence."

"At Parkhead, we are all told to support the attack and concentrate on putting the pressure on our opponents all the time."

"I like to get up there and join the forwards and have a pop at



goal, but I realise I must be back when the other team counter-attacks. It can be a bit exhausting, but I enjoy every minute of it."

Reid doesn't often hit the headlines, but he doesn't complain. "It doesn't bother me one little bit," he says. "I only care about the final result. Just so long as Celtic keep on winning I'll keep on winning."

Reid has done so well since fighting his way back into the team that the whisper around Parkhead is that Celtic may be tempted into selling Brian Whittaker.

That action, in itself, clearly underlines the current form of this unassuming youngster who is undoubtedly unaffected by hero worship.

Finished

JOHNNY raced to reach the ball as a defender closed in to try to cover the path to goal. It was a situation he had been in dozens of times before in the 160 games he had already played that season, but this time there was a difference. Johnny could feel a tearing sensation in his right knee, as if somebody had cut into him with a knife, and he released a cry of pain as he collapsed to the ground. It was the last time he was ever going to challenge for a ball. He was burned out and finished as a footballer. Johnny was just 14-years-old.

We make no apologies for this dramatic start to our special report on overplayed schoolboy footballers. The fictional case of Johnny is, sadly, fact for many young players who are being pushed beyond their physical limits in the quest for football pride and prizes.

Too often it is the pride of pushy parents, ambitious schoolteachers and junior club managers that is the root cause of one of the most worrying and alarming traits in modern football.

They coax and cajole youngsters into playing more competitive football than is good for them and many are worn out before they have reached physical maturity.

Developed

Let us go back to our fictional footballer Johnny. We are sure you know somebody like him:

Johnny started playing organised football at the age of seven for a Sunday league team run by his father. He developed such good ball control that at the age of nine he was promoted into the Under-11's team at his school. This was a typical weekend's action:

Saturday morning: An Under-11's school match.

Saturday afternoon: A game for his cub's team. Sunday morning: A game with his father's Sunday league team. Sunday afternoon: A match for the junior team of his father's social club.

He was also playing two games in midweek for his school and his father had started a Wednesday night floodlit league with, of course, a star spot in his team for Johnny. By the time he was 11 Johnny was regularly playing at least six matches a week.

There was no doubt that Johnny had excellent ability and his schoolmaster made the most of it by promoting him to his Under-16's team, who were challenging for the local area schools' shield.

By the time he was 13, Johnny was a key player in three of his school's teams and his Sunday performances prompted his father



Tottenham physiotherapist report on the dangers of much football.

to tip off a professional scout about his son's ability.

His father couldn't believe his ears when the scout told him his son was not "a thinking footballer" and was going through the motions of playing without using his head.

Johnny's dad dismissed the scout as an idiot and encouraged his son to step up his effort. "You've got to work harder and make them sit up and take notice of you," he said.

His schoolteacher told him: "Just keep doing your best for the school. We must get that shield this season."

So it was that Johnny, trying to please his dad and to meet the expectations of his schoolteacher, chased that pass, overstretched and collapsed with a knee injury brought on by playing too much football on limbs not yet fully developed.

It is not our intention in this

investigation to discourage boys from playing football. We strongly feel that it remains the greatest game on earth and we are right behind England manager Bobby Robson in his launching of the Football Association's "School of Excellence" to discover and polish any diamond-bright prospects.

But we do want to stress our concern at the growing number of incidents of young footballers being forced to give up the game because of injuries brought about by being put under excessive strain at an early age.

Have you ever heard of Osgood-Schlatter? You just might think they are a pair of full-backs.

Osgood-Schlatter is in fact a medical term for injuries caused by wear and tear and over-use of the limbs of youngsters, and more and more schoolboy footballers are becoming familiar with the term as they break down under the stress and strain of too much football.

There is growing concern about

Mike Varney treats Tottenham full-back Chris Hughton.



Mike Varney issued a disturbing warning to youngsters playing too much football. Now *Shoot* investigates ...

It's in the professional game. Mike Varney, Tottenham's highly-regarded physiotherapist, spotlighted the problem with an article in the recent issue of the medical magazine *Current*

Varney made the disturbing statement that in five years he has seen 300 cases of Osgood-Schlatter injuries to young players.

He commented, "These kids are victims of what I call the gladiator syndrome. They are sent out to do battle for parents and teachers who want to bask in their reflected glory."

He added: "I'm not saying that every boy who plays 200 games a year breaks down, but a high percentage do. They are over-coached and taught there is a given response to every given situation."

"As conditioned, robotic athletes they are not allowed to get on with playing the game the way it should be played. Sooner or later they become fed up with football, playing like mini-robots with no flair or imagination, and their potential can fade by the time they reach 14."

Shoot columnist Jimmy Greaves told our special investigator: "I have been saying for years that there is too much pressure on schoolboy footballers. When I was a kid I always had a



Trevor Brooking (left) and Kevin Keegan (above) both believe that youngsters begin playing competitive football at far too early an age.

ball at my feet, knocking it against walls and lamp-posts and sharpening my skills that way.

"Nowadays you rarely see kids playing with a ball in the street or park simply because they are playing too much competitive football which drains their appetite and enthusiasm for the game."

"I don't think playing too much football is the trouble as much as too much pressure football. Go to any parks pitch on a Saturday or Sunday and you will see parents and teachers screaming and

shouting at their kids, demanding extra effort and putting the fear of God into them."

"They are not allowed to develop natural skills and have teachers and parents — often failed footballers themselves — talking mumbo-jumbo tactics."

"I don't think kids should play competitive football until they are at least 13 or 14. Let them enjoy the game and find out just what they can do without anybody stifling the inventive minds that youngsters have."

Trevor Brooking, West Ham's intelligent first gentleman of the game, agrees with the Greaves assessment.

"Football can be dangerous for youngsters if they are taught to regard it as the be-all-and-end-all," he says.

"Up to the age of 11, I believe boys should play for fun only. After that, competition should be balanced carefully with training in football skills."

Spurs manager Keith Burkinshaw is outspoken on the subject. "Boys are not machines," he says.

"We've got to take kids away from the pressure of competing from the age of eight."

The great Kevin Keegan believes that many schoolboy footballers are given unfair pressures at too early an age. "I was 15 before I started doing any serious training," he says. "In two years I had improved so dramatically that it probably accounted for my later successes. "If I had done all that by the age

of 11 or 12 I would not have had the necessary hunger or appetite for the game."

Co-inciding with this *Shoot* investigation is the publication of a penetrating paperback book called "It's A Tough Game, Son!" (published by Piccolo at £1.25). The author is BBC television sports presenter David Icke, whose promising career as a League goalkeeper was wrecked by arthritic joints when he was just 20.

Pitfalls

He has seen and experienced all the triumphs and pitfalls facing young footballers and *Shoot* strongly recommend that any boy dreaming of a career as a professional player should read it and digest all the lessons that David learned the hard way.

It is the truth about the game refreshingly told with glory-dreaming youngsters in mind.

Football is a wonderful game to play and enjoy. It must not be allowed to become a chore or a treadmill.

Parents, schoolteachers and club coaches should take the pressure off their young players by telling them that it is only a game and — above all — they should not overplay them.

We don't want to report any more cases like that of our fictional character Johnny. And that's a fact.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

See if you can spot ten differences between the two cartoons. Answers on page 34



Colin Jackson is set on heroics for Rangers as he comes out of retirement to help Morton's promotion bid

Dumbarton and the manager asked me to do a job. I was only too glad to get out there and do my stuff."

Subsequently, he has shown he has not lost his touch as Morton set a course towards promotion.

If Jackson's big-time experience is a great boost to Morton's defence, the presence of goal-ace Willie Pettigrew has the same effect on the front-line.

Since joining Tommy McLean's team on loan at the turn of the year, Willie has recaptured the scoring form which won him international honours while with Motherwell and League Cup medals with Dundee United.

And having spent two unproductive years with Hearts, the player is only too glad to be back on the ball.

'Exercise'

"It's great to be wanted again," he grins. "Playing reserve team football with Hearts was a soul-destroying exercise and my career was going nowhere fast.

"I've struck up a good working relationship with John McNeil and Dougie Robertson at Morton and scoring and winning regularly has worked wonders for my confidence."

It is safe to assume that manager McLean was equally happy and he declared his faith in Pettigrew's ability by spending £10,000 to finalise his transfer, obviously with next season's Premier Division programme in mind.

In addition to Jackson and Pettigrew, Morton have an



Willie Pettigrew

experienced core to their team in defenders Jim Holmes and Jim Duffy and midfield men Dom Sullivan and Jim Rooney.

And with exciting youngsters like strikers Robertson and McNeil and midfield prospects Martin Doak and Eddie McNab, the confidence expressed by Pettigrew and Jackson is clearly not without justification.

'BOMBER'S' CRASH COURSE

MORTON manager Tommy McLean is banking on experience giving his team the edge as the promotion race at the top of the Scottish First Division enters its closing stages.

Shortly after re-introducing former Rangers and Scotland defender Colin Jackson to the rigours of first team football, McLean finalised the signing of Willie Pettigrew from Hearts after the 30-year-old striker had spent a loan period with the Greenock club.

The know-how of both players will clearly help Morton as they bid to secure a swift return to the Premier Division.

The return of 37-year-old Jackson marks the beginning of chapter three of his amazing playing career. After almost 20 years with Rangers, with whom he won every honour Scottish football can offer, he retired two years ago.

However, the lure of the game soon drew him out of retirement and he had brief periods with Morton and Partick Thistle before again hanging up his boots.

But a few chance meetings with the late Morton director Hal Stewart led to 'Bomber' staging another comeback.

"I bumped into Hal once or twice and he was always on at me to help out at Cappielow," he explains. "And, after a bit of thought, I decided to have a go."

"Initially my job was to have a look at our opponents prior to them meeting Morton then report back to the manager. I enjoyed being involved in the game again but, at that stage, I really did not envisage myself making a comeback as a player."

"However, I made up the numbers in our reserve team on a few occasions and the bug began to bite. There is no substitute for playing and, having kept myself in good condition, I certainly felt capable of holding my own."

"So when injuries ruled several of our defenders out of our Cup-tie with

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PERU MISERY

PERU'S hopes of qualifying for the 1986 World Cup are beginning to look like a sick joke in the eyes of their disappointed supporters.

Recent performances have been poor and their hopes of lifting morale with a good display against Honduras in Lima were shattered. Honduras won 3-1 with goals by Cahallero, Drummond and an own goal by Culimana.



Torocsik's torment

ANDRAS Torocsik of Ujpest Dozsa is at the centre of a growing row between the FA's of Hungary and Greece.

The Hungarians accuse AEK Athens of illegally approaching Torocsik when the nations met in December in the European Championship.

Torocsik, however, wants to go as Ujpest have received Government permission to put a fee on his head that converts into £80,000.

They are trying to deter the Greeks, but if they fail, will keep a close eye on their player because if he seeks asylum in the West, Torocsik will face a two-year ban from playing.

AXE FOR RUMMENIGGE?

KARL-HEINZ Rummenigge's transfer to Inter Milan may cost him the captaincy of West Germany in the European Championship this June.

German manager Jupp Derwall wants his team captain to be a Bundesliga player and has told Rummenigge so in no uncertain terms. Now it looks as if Karl-Heinz Forster of VfB Stuttgart is top candidate.

NEW York Cosmos president Rafael de Sierra has announced a four-team tournament in New York from May 20 to June 2.

Flamengo, Udinese and Barcelona will join the hosts in a knock-out spectacle that will cost more than \$500,000 to stage.



Barcelona's demands were... SHEER GREED!

HOW selfish can a football club become? Barcelona angered thousands of their loyal supporters for putting cash before customers in an open war with Spanish television.

Only hours remained before the kick-off at Old Trafford as Manchester United and Barcelona prepared to lock antlers in their European Cup-Winners' Cup Quarter-Final second-leg.

Twenty European nations waited in excited anticipation to see the big clash on television... but Spanish fans were preparing to huddle around their radios.

Barcelona had tried to catch the TV moguls unaware and demanded a fee of £75,000 'appearance' money if their game

at Old Trafford was to be screened!

The TV man refused to be blackmailed and decided not to screen the game, despite the fact that Barcelona were Spain's only side left in European competition.

It took the personal intervention of Catalan president, Jordi Pujol, who insisted Barcelona backed down to ensure that the game was screened.

Even then the club did it with a bad grace, protesting and whining to the last.

Neeskens eyes Switzerland



They tell me...

● Denmark manager Sepp Piontek, who masterminded their European Championship triumph over England, is now a worried man. He blasted his players after their shock 6-0 hammering in Holland and warned them that qualifying was only half the battle. Now they have to prove they can sustain their new status in France this summer.

● Gerry Armstrong (right) has given struggling Spanish side Real Mallorca a shot in the arm. The Northern Ireland international insists: "If we go down I will be

JOHAN Neeskens is returning from the United States to finish his career in Europe.

The 32-year-old Dutch midfield player will leave New York Cosmos when his contract ends in the autumn and hopes to sign for a Swiss First Division club.

Capped 49 times by Holland, Neeskens played in the 1974 and 1978 World Cup Finals. He won a host of honours during his spells with Ajax and Barcelona before signing for Cosmos five years ago.

He said: "I've been impressed by the standard of Swiss football, which has improved a lot in recent seasons."

.....
very disappointed, but I have another year on my contract and I will definitely honour it. This is a fine club and I am happy in Spain."

● Allan Simonsen, whose luxury home in Vejle, Denmark, was recently burned to the ground, is not too unhappy. The reason: "I have recovered well from a knee operation, and all my football trophies are lodged in the vault of my bank."

● Vaclav Jezek, who led Czechoslovakia to victory in the 1976 European Championship and is currently managing Czech League leaders Sparta Prague, is leaving his job in June to become boss of FC Zurich

UNHAPPY ULLI

ULLI Stielike's seemingly endless injury problems are worrying Real Madrid and West German international manager Jupp Derwall. Stielike, 29, has played only 28 games for Real this season and is now on the sidelines again with a torn muscle.

But as Derwall prepares to defend the European Championship in France this summer, he must soon make a decision about the versatile Stielike (below) who can operate equally effectively at sweeper or in midfield.



SPANISH CRISIS

SPANISH football faces a crisis of crippling proportions unless clubs can find £2.3 million before the end of the season.

That's the amount they owe to hundreds of angry players in outstanding wages and Juan Jose Iriarte, president of the players' union AFE, warns that unless the money is paid before the summer, season 1984-85 will be a washout.



● Roger Rocher, chairman of St. Etienne, still languishes in jail three months after being arrested on charges of corruption and financial irregularities. So far the Lyon magistrates refuse to grant him bail!

No goals but plenty of near misses as Everton and Liverpool served up a memorable Milk Cup Final at Wembley. Everton fans argue the game should never have gone to a replay after Alan Hansen handled in the box, but at the end of the day a draw was a fair result.

MERSEY MAGIC



Ian Rush, normally so deadly in front of goal, is denied by Everton keeper Neville Southall

RANGERS are back! That was the message emphatically hammered out at Hampden Park as Jock Wallace's men avenged last season's Scottish League Cup Final defeat by beating Celtic 3-2 in extra-time.

RANGERS



Ally McCoist, Bobby Russell, Jimmy Nicholl and Sandy Clark enjoy their moment of triumph



CREAM TOFFEES

WEMBLEY always produces its heroes. Often it's an unknown who blossoms on the big day and emerges from the shadow cast by more illustrious team-mates and opponents.

Before the Milk Cup Final the names that tripped off the tongue were those of Kenny Dalglish, Graeme Souness, Ian Rush and Mark Lawrenson.

But by the time the final whistle went those renowned Liverpool stars had been overshadowed by four Everton players — Neville Southall, Kevin Ratcliffe, Peter Reid and John Bailey.

The most important thing to emerge from this marvellous Final



TO those Everton fans who believe the Milk Cup Final should not have required a replay, Alan Hansen, the man at the centre of the handball storm, has an honest and blunt message.

"Yes, I handled the ball," says Hansen, "but no, it was not intentional."

Liverpool's Scottish international central defender swept across his six-yard area in the sixth minute of the dramatic Wembley "derby" Final to prevent Adrian Heath's goal-bound shot from giving Everton a deserved lead.

Everyone watching the match, either at Wembley or on TV, saw that Hansen controlled the ball with his left hand ... everyone, that is, except referee Alan Robinson who waved play on.

But the usually quiet and reserved young Scot insists: "Adrian and Bruce Grobbelaar tussled for the ball on the edge of our box, Adrian managed to scoop it goalwards while on the ground and I saw the danger quickly.

"I ran across the flight of the ball, it hit my knee and bounced on to my arm, I was guilty of a piece of bad ball-control more than anything else, but there is no way it was intentional and both the referee and the linesman obviously agreed.

"I can understand Everton's frustration but on the other hand I think they will admit that it was a fair result in the end."

is the fact that Everton — nicknamed "The Toffees" — are now closer than they have been for 14 years to making a real and lasting challenge to Liverpool's superiority.

Their excellent football, smooth, composed and laced with skill, gave their fans the chance to "Ole!" repeatedly as Liverpool

scampered around a wet Wembley in a vain effort to regain possession — a sight as rare as the Dodo bird.

Southall, now Wales' number one keeper, became a household name with a magnificent display, capped by a wonder-save to deny Ian Rush.

Reid, whose career was almost wrecked by a series of crippling injuries, graced midfield with tenacity, skill and precise distribution that kept Liverpool under constant pressure.

Bailey, known as the dressing-room comedian, was magnificent in defence and attack.

'Display'

"We gave our fans the type of display they've longed for in recent years and what better place to do it than Wembley," he beamed.

And Ratcliffe, Welsh team-mate and friend of Rush, did a superb job keeping the deadly striker at bay for most of the two hours and controlled his defence at the same time.

Surely one of the fastest defenders in the game, he also broke out to set up attacks with accurate long balls to the wings and totally overshadowed both Lawrenson and Alan Hansen of Liverpool.

Howard Kendall summed it all up when he said: "We have just shown the world that we are a good team. There were so many outstanding individual performances that I will not single out any. In my opinion all my players were superb, from goalkeeper to substitute."



Kevin Ratcliffe (left) tussles with Liverpool dangerman Kenny Dalglish.

ALAN HANSEN. The 'Quiet Man speaks out'

"There's no taking it away from them, Everton played exceptionally well in the first-half, taking the game to us and displaying great composure and confidence.

"But we looked the more dangerous side in the second-half and could have wrapped it up but for Neville Southall.

"Most important of all it was a tremendous game to play in, equally good to watch and a great advert for the British game. I believe both sets of fans should be proud of their teams."



Sunderland's new boss gets down to a tough job

has to be done and see what we produce at the finish."

Ashurst wasted no time in recruiting another Sunderland legend who feels exactly the same way. Jim Montgomery, who made more than 500 first team appearances for Sunderland and was the goalkeeping hero of their 1973 F.A. Cup triumph, is also back in the Roker fold.

"Monty will be here part-time to work with our goalkeepers. There is no one better — and, of course, I've also got Pop Robson on the staff."

Ashurst left a three-year contract at Cardiff lying unsigned to take over at Roker, even though no contract is on offer at

Sunderland. That is a measure of his depth of feeling about the club.

"I want to lift Sunderland and have us chasing the top honours in football. If I succeed in that ambition, I'll be able to sit down later on and write my own contract. If this situation doesn't fire up everyone concerned, then nothing will!"

"I don't want to give the impression that the club is down in heart and spirit — far from it. It is simply a case of 'got to do better'."

"In fact, I've found the spirit in the dressing-room to be very much what I hoped for. Their attitude and application is good. I was

ASHURST ON FIRE

LEN Ashurst achieved an ambition he feared had passed him by forever when he was appointed Sunderland manager last month.

For Ashurst, who made more than 450 appearances as full-back for the club, had reluctantly turned down the chance to take charge at Roker Park five years earlier.

Explains the man recently named as Alan Durban's successor: "I had always dreamed of being boss at Sunderland, so it was agony to turn them down when the job was first offered."

"But I did not like the constitution of the board at the time. If I had taken the job, I wouldn't have been able to carry out my duties as I wanted to."

Ashurst spent 14 years at Roker Park as a player and now he is back he promises that second best will never be good enough for Sunderland.

"That, however, is my only promise. I am not going to talk about sleeping giants, huge potential or stand-back-and-light-the-blue-touch-paper. That is not my style. Let's get down to the work that



NOBBY

THERE IT GOES, AN UNSTOPPABLE SHOT FROM TWO YARDS



BUT WHY ISN'T BOBBY ROBSON HERE TO SEE ME SCORE?



BECAUSE HE DOESN'T COVER RESERVE GAMES THAT'S WHY



ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! THERE'S NO NEED TO TELL EVERYBODY I'VE BEEN DROPPED!



MARK Chamberlain, the winger who surged from the Fourth Division to England international status last season, is now learning the hard way — fighting back to the form which makes him one of football's most exciting prospects.

CHAMBERLAIN

Dropped from the recent England squads, he says: "I was very disappointed ... but I couldn't honestly say that it came as a surprise. I hadn't been doing well and nor had Stoke."

"Now we are flat out to battle our way clear of relegation. The results are coming along again and my 'touch' is returning. It's happened to me before that I've run into a patch when I could do nothing right. I have always clambered out of it and I will do so this time."

"As a Port Vale player, I had my ups and downs. The manager there at the time, John McGrath, used everything to get me playing again. He would make me sub or drop me altogether and tell me to battle my way back."

'Problem'

"So I've learnt how to cope with this problem — but, of course, it has been that much more of a let-down after everything that happened last season."

It was yet another managerial chat, this time with Stoke's Bill Asprey, that helped Mark turn the corner.

"The boss told me he didn't think I was taking quite enough responsibility, and from that moment my form has started coming back. I began to take on opposing players with more determination and getting past them and have also scored a couple of goals."

Amid all the headline publicity that heralded Mark's stunning arrival last season in the First Division, he scored just six League goals. This time, he is poised to score more.

Alan Hudson has helped to lift struggling Stoke



COMEBACK

"Maybe the season hasn't been so good in overall terms, but I aim to finish it by at least being able to turn round and look at one area of improvement," he states.

Bill Asprey's careful words of guidance have coincided with the arrival of Alan Hudson at the Victoria Ground. "Alan's influence on the pitch has been tremendous," says Chamberlain.

"His arrival has helped lift us from a tight corner and find our way again."

"He is a tremendous 'general' on the pitch as well as a terrific talker in the dressing-room."

"Before he came, the spirit was good enough during the week but once we went out for a game everything seemed to come apart. Every time we got the ball away, it seemed to be whacked straight

back down our throats; players were afraid to try things and the confidence just crumbled."

"Now it's a completely different story. The atmosphere is back on match days and so is the self belief that wins matches. A lot of that is down to Alan."

"Wingers are always the first to suffer when a side hits heavy weather. Chamberlain looked sensational in Stoke's highly successful campaign last season, but this time he has suffered from a lack of service."

"I wasn't getting much of the ball as we struggled to get results, but then again I wasn't doing much when it did come my way," he admits candidly.

"It made matters worse for me that I'm a local lad. Most of the other players live out of town but

I've always been around Stoke. Wherever I went, supporters were asking me what was wrong."

"I decided that the best way was to be honest with them. Excuses aren't for me and, from past experience, I knew my luck would change. It is just that England caps and publicity out of the blue have concentrated attention on me. But I'm not complaining — I'll live with that!"

The 22-year-old winger has those exceptional talents of pace, control and footwork in huge amounts. Now he has tasted life at the top and is determined to enjoy plenty more of it.

His comeback at Stoke has shown determination as well as natural skill — and that is bound to win him high marks from England boss Bobby Robson.

ANSWERS:

1. England's Shengilia scored to eliminate Scotland.

2. TRANSFERS: (a) West Ham and Whittaker from Partick

3. LEAGUE: (a) Birmingham, (b) Coventry, (c) Derby, (d) Middlesbrough, (e) Sunderland, (f) West Ham, (g) Liverpool, (h) Newcastle, (i) Nottingham Forest, (j) Birmingham, (k) Middlesbrough, (l) Newcastle, (m) West Ham, (n) Liverpool, (o) Newcastle, (p) Birmingham, (q) Middlesbrough, (r) Newcastle, (s) West Ham, (t) Birmingham, (u) Middlesbrough, (v) Newcastle, (w) Birmingham, (x) Middlesbrough, (y) Newcastle, (z) West Ham.

4. GOALKEEPERS: (a) Hamish McAlpine, (b) Jim Leighton, 2. No.

5. IDENTITY PARADE: 1. Martin Kuhl, 2. Ian Atkins of Sunderland, 3. Ipswich's Trevor Lomax, 4. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 5. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 6. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 7. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 8. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 9. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 10. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 11. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 12. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 13. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 14. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 15. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 16. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 17. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 18. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 19. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 20. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 21. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 22. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 23. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 24. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 25. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 26. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 27. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 28. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 29. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 30. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 31. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 32. Newcastle's Alan Hansen, 33. West Ham's Alan Hansen, 34. Birmingham's Alan Hansen, 35. 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SCOTTISH LEAGUE CUP FINAL '84



THE Cup that cheers... that's my verdict of the Scottish League Cup. And can anyone blame me?

Beating Celtic 3-2 after extra-time at Hampden certainly cheered me up. Winning that trophy makes this season all worthwhile... It's tangible proof that Rangers are back in business.

It was wonderful to beat our old rivals. I know a lot of people may have written us off before the Final, but there is no way anyone can predict an Old Firm encounter.

We may have been hit by injuries and suspensions, but that just made everyone at Ibrox more determined to go out there and beat Celtic.

There are three very good reasons why I am happy we won that lovely piece of silverware.

FIRSTLY, on a selfish note, it was great to captain Rangers to victory at Hampden. It meant so much to me.

After losing the past two Scottish Cup Finals to Aberdeen and also to Celtic in the League Cup last season, it made the wait almost unbearable, but now that it has ended it was most enjoyable.

STAR WRITER JOHN McCLELLAND

Let's face it, all the pressure was on us. Had we lost against Celtic our season would have ended there and then. We would have gone yet another year without a trophy success... and that's not good enough!

SECONDLY, I was delighted for manager Jock Wallace. He's a big man in every sense of the word and he wants to be remembered as a winner. He got things going when he took over in October and this success is a tribute to him, too.

THIRDLY, I was really happy for our fans, who have stood by us superbly in recent times.

And, of course, I mustn't forget our three-goal hero at Hampden Park — Ally McCoist.

Since joining us from Sunderland, Ally has worked very hard on his game and it all came together in the Final.

Our season could have crashed round about our ears had we lost to

Celtic at Hampden. Eight days before we had suffered our first defeat in 22 games... and that loss was enough to end our interest in the Scottish Cup.

We were looking forward to reaching the Final for the ninth successive season, but we were to be denied in the Quarter-Finals by battling Dundee.

I said in this column that it would be tough. I also said it might take a replay before we won

through. We certainly didn't underestimate Archie Knox's team and when we drew 2-2 in the first game at Dens Park it looked as though my prediction was going to be bang-on.

But we lost 3-2 and that was that. Actually, those encounters underline just how strange football can be.

We didn't play particularly well at Dens Park, but managed a draw and weren't far away from victory.

At Ibrox we played reasonably well but didn't get a thing. I doubt if Dundee goalkeeper Colin Kelly will ever have another afternoon like that one.

We seemed to hit most of our shots straight at him and the efforts that got past him seemed to hit our own players and rebound to safety!

Anyway, all the best to Dundee in their Semi-Final. I'm not taking anything away from them.

Now we have ended our barren run by lifting the League Cup to book a place in next season's UEFA Cup, our immediate target must be to keep on picking up League points to see how high we can finish in the table.

I suppose we are already building for next season, when the Premier Division title will be our number one target.

Now I've finally got my hands on some silverware I have a hunger for even more.

Yes, that League Cup victory has really cheered me up, but let's not dwell on the past. Rangers can now look to the future with confidence.



Ally McCoist
blasts out
all important
winner at
Hampden

BIG MATCHES OF THE DAY

Saturday, 7th April

Arsenal v Stoke

IN 35 League visits to Arsenal, Stoke have only been able to score more than a single goal three times! The last occasion was back in 1964-65 when centre-forward John Ritchie netted two in a 3-2 defeat. Since then Stoke have only scored a total of seven goals in 16 visits, but the latest one, by Lee Chapman two seasons ago, brought them a 1-0 victory. If Stoke pull off another win on Saturday they will complete their fourth League double over The Gunners since their first meeting in 1904.

Aston Villa v Coventry

THE Sky Blues are still looking for their first League win at Villa Park after ten League visits. So far they have drawn there five times and lost five, including defeats in their last four visits. Last season they were thoroughly beaten 4-0 with goals by Gary Shaw, Peter Withe (2) and Allan Evans.

Liverpool v West Ham

ENGLAND international Michael Robinson starred in the latest meeting between these two clubs, scoring a hat-trick in Liverpool's 3-1 win at Upton Park. West Ham have not won a League game at Anfield since 1963-64, or even scored in their last four League visits. However, they have drawn three of their last six League games at Anfield and are always capable of springing a surprise.

Man. Utd v Birmingham

SINCE Birmingham returned to the First Division in 1980 they have lost four and drawn three League games with United, including a 2-2 draw at St Andrews two months ago. Two goals is the most Blues have ever managed in a League visit to Manchester United and the last time they scored that many was in 1977-78, when they won 2-1 — their most recent League victory at Old Trafford.

Nottm. Forest v WBA

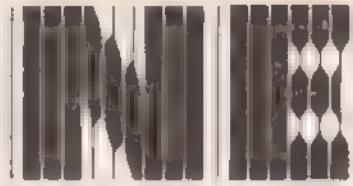
ALTHOUGH Albion beat Forest 3-1 when they met in a Milk Cup tie at The Hawthorns last season, they also have the memory of a 6-1 defeat in the same competition last season at Nottingham and of that much more recent 5-0 hammering at The Hawthorns only two months ago.

Sunderland v Spurs

TOTTENHAM have a good record at Roker Park, with five wins and two draws in their last nine League visits. If they can either win or draw on Saturday it will be the first time in a run of 36 League games on this ground that they will have avoided defeat as many as five times in a row.

Rangers v Hearts

RANGERS have not dropped a single point in their last eight League games against Hearts at Ibrox. If they win again on Saturday they will equal their best run of home wins against this Edinburgh club, which was established between 1895 and 1904. Earlier this season Hearts were beaten 3-0 at Ibrox and have only scored one goal in their last four Premier Division games on this ground.



BY MARK IRWIN

DONS CHAS

HIBS are to go on a three-match tour of Cyprus and Jordan at the end of the season. The Easter Road side will meet Periponcos Laraca — managed by former Motherwell boss Willie McLean — then play Russian Amman — coached by ex Dundee men George Blues — and a second Jordanian

AMBITION ABERDEEN are ready to make a move for Charlie Nicholas should the Arsenal striker decide to return to his native Scotland.

Nicholas has already ruled out a possible return to his former club Celtic and insists that he is happy to remain at Highbury despite his problems this season.

But Aberdeen manager Alex Ferguson believes he could still lure Charlie to Pittodrie.

Says Ferguson: "If Arsenal were to make Charlie available for a transfer, I would certainly try to sign him."

"We are ambitious at Aberdeen and could offer him European competition and darned good wages.

"I have been looking all over Europe for a proven goalscorer, but there aren't too many around.

"However, Charlie Nicholas is one and, regardless of the stick he's taken since his move to Arsenal, I'm sure he'd pack the crowds in if he came to Pittodrie.

"I'm looking for a player who will score 35 goals in a season. Charlie is the sort of guy to do it."

But Ferguson has ruled out the possibility of a player-exchange deal involving midfield dynamo Gordon Strachan.

"I am still hoping to persuade Gordon to stay here when his contract runs out in the summer," says Ferguson.

"Perhaps playing alongside Charlie could make Gordon change his mind about leaving."

LEICESTER'S Bob Hazell (above) admits he'll never be truly happy at Filbert Street because of a racist element among the club's supporters

The Jamaican-born defender admits "In recent weeks friends such as Cyrille Regis, Noel Blake and Howard Gayle have all come in for abuse from our fans

"It's upset them and it's upset me, too. I've never had this problem before and now I won't go to any supporters' club functions as a gesture of defiance."

One faction want caretaker manager

Bobby Collins to be given the job on a permanent basis at the end of the season while the others are in favour of trying to lure Jack Charlton back into football

Charlton has already gone on record as saying that if he does return, it will only be with a big club who have a chance of winning things in Europe. Somehow, I don't think Barnsley quite fits the bill!



'KEEPER WITHE

ASTON VILLA centre-forward Peter Withe showed he could stop goals as well as score them when he deputised for the injured Nigel Spink in a 3-3 draw at Coventry.

Then Withe revealed that he actually started his much-travelled soccer career as a goalie.

"It was when I was 17, and the only way I could get a game for the works

team was to go in goal," explained the former England striker

"They wanted me to stay there — but I was always determined to be a centre-forward.

"I quite enjoyed going between the sticks when Nigel was hurt — but I'd sooner carry on dishing out the punishment to goalkeepers than be on the receiving end!"

STRIKER KEITH GORMAN must have set some kind of record when he turned professional with Ipswich in January — for he's now been with eight clubs and is only 17-years-old!

Apart from his current spell at Portman Road, the much-travelled teenager has also been with Newcastle, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Notts County, WBA, Chelsea and Leeds.

IPSWICH FOR THE DROP'

— Milne

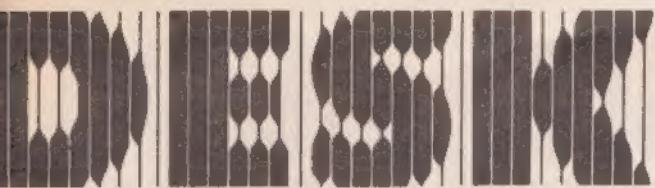
LEICESTER BOSS Gordon Milne believes Ipswich could find themselves in Division Two next season ... because they aren't used to fighting against relegation.

"If I were a betting man I'd put money on those teams used to such a battle," said Milne. "There are one or two teams who have slipped in to the relegation zone, such as Ipswich, and it'll be interesting to see how they go in the next few weeks."

"Handling success or safety is one thing ... continually battling with the fear of failure is another. Some sides at the bottom are conditioned for what lies ahead because they've been through it before. They're coming into their own and they'll relish a fight."

Did you know?

Only four teams in the last 13 seasons have beaten Liverpool both home and away in the same season. The famous four 'double winners' are Leeds (1971-72), Arsenal (1974-75), Leicester (1977-78) and Norwich (1982-83).



CHARLIE

ON THE MOVE

THE BEAT THE DEADLINE DEALS

Brian Roberts	Coventry to Birmingham	£10,000
Tony Greash	Brighton to WBA	£25,000
Steve Hunt	Coventry to WBA	£70,000
John Philibin	Sunderland to Doncaster	£70,000
Jim Dobbin	Celtic to Doncaster	£25,000
Steve Taylor	Wigan to Stockport	Free
Martin Dobson	Burnley to Bury	Free
John Wark	Ipswich to Liverpool	£450,000
John Aldridge	Newport to Oxford	£70,000
Les Phillips	Birmingham to Oxford	£10,000
Glenn Cockerill	Lincoln to Shif. Utd.	£120,000
Mike Conroy	Coventry to St. Johnstone	Free
Gordon Smith	Brighton to Man. City	Free
Dave Bamber	Coventry to Walsall	£50,000
Tommy Langley	AEK Athens to Coventry	Free
Romeo Zondervan	WBA to Ipswich	£70,000
Mark Grew	Leicester to Ipswich	£60,000
Allen Brown	Shrewsbury to Doncaster	£35,000
Paul Fletcher	Derby to Barnsley	£30,000
Kevin Stoenhouse	Huddersfield to Blackpool	£25,000
Alan Birch	Chesterfield to Rotherham	£25,000
Alan Rogers	Portsmouth to Southend	£20,000
Keith Houchen	Orient to York	£15,000
Calvin Plummer	Derby to Barnsley	£10,000
Paul Maddy	Swansea to Hereford	£5,000
Ken Burns	Leeds to Derby	Free
Gerry Worrall	Man. Utd to Peterborough	Free
David Wakefield	Darlington to Torquay	Free
Paul Gregor	Chesterfield to Doncaster	Free
Mervyn Cowston	Southend to Stoke	Free

Willie's choice

FORMER ARSENAL favourite Willie Young is ready to retire rather than join the mad scramble for a new club when his Norwich contract expires at the end of the season.

The big Scotsman is back at Carrow Road after a month's loan with Brighton and now seems certain to be given a free transfer by The Canaries.

But rather than carry on at a lower level, 32-year-old Young would prefer to help his wife run their thriving equestrian centre in Newark on a full-time basis.

HARD-LUCK STORY of the year comes from non-League Hyde United, who planned to sell videos of their F.A. Cup First Round tie at Burnley to raise much-needed revenue.

Only chairman Peter Pluck had a film of this momentous match, so it was decided he should make a number of recordings from his master copy.

Sadly, ten-year-old daughter Justine preferred to watch the antics of Tom & Jerry to Hyde's 2-0 defeat, and Peter discovered to his horror that his unique historical archive had been over-recorded by two hours of the cartoon duo!

BARRY COWDRILL had a run of 29 consecutive games in the West Bromwich Albion first team earlier this season but in recent weeks he has been back in the reserves.

The reason is that Derek Statham is now fully fit and has re-established himself as first choice under the new management of Johnny Giles.

Cowdrill, (right) is far from happy. He said: "Going back into the reserves this time has been very difficult to accept in view of my run in the League side.

"I'm still on the transfer list from earlier in the season and I just hope that someone remembers my form when I was in the team."



BIRMINGHAM boss Ron Saunders has appointed Billy Wright as first team captain — and completed a remarkable transition in the central defender's career.

The appointment comes less than 12 months after the 25-year-old Liverpudlian was given a free transfer from Everton.

Since then Wright has become an ever-present in Saunders' set-up, forming with Noel Blake one of the First Division's most formidable defensive partnerships.

IT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

April 8, 1969: Derby County are fined £10,000 and banned from the next Fairs Cup competition for "gross negligence in the administration of the club."

April 8, 1978: Mick Martin, playing for WBA against Ipswich, becomes only the second player to be sent-off in an F.A. Cup Semi-Final, the first being Arthur Childs with Hull v Arsenal in March, 1930.

April 9, 1969: Wilf McGuinness, former England left-half, is appointed Manchester United's chief coach.

April 10, 1965: Jack and Bobby Charlton, playing against Scotland at Wembley, become the first brothers to appear together for England in a full international since Frank and Fred Forman (Nottingham Forest) did so in 1899.

April 11, 1955: Accrington Stanley, in a match against York City, become the first club to turn out an all-Scottish team in a Football League match for more than 50 years.

April 11, 1961: Ron Greenwood is appointed West Ham manager.

April 11, 1967: Mike Channon makes his Football League debut for Southampton v Bristol City.

April 11, 1972: Ron Yeats is appointed Tranmere Rovers' player-manager.

April 12, 1973: Malcolm Allison is appointed Crystal Palace manager.

April 12, 1974: Tony Book is appointed Manchester City manager after he had been a player with the club for eight years.

April 12, 1980: Brian Kidd, playing for Everton against West Ham in a Semi-Final, becomes the only player to be sent-off three times in F.A. Cup-ties.

April 12, 1982: Bristol Rovers have two points deducted for fielding an unregistered player, Steve Bailey, in a 1-1 draw at Newport.

April 13, 1957: Crewe Alexandra's 1-0 defeat of Bradford City ends the longest spell any club had without winning a Football League match — 30 Division Three (North) games in a period of seven months.

April 13, 1978: Birmingham's Trevor Francis becomes Britain's highest-paid player at £1,500 a week by signing to play during the summer for Detroit Express.



Cattlin hits back

ANGRY BRIGHTON boss Chris Cattlin has hit back at comments made by former Seagull Tony Greash after completing his £95,000 transfer to WBA.

Greash claimed that Cattlin had sold all Brighton's best players despite a secret dressing-room pact to get the club straight back to the First Division.

Counts Cattlin: "It wasn't me who sold Mike Robinson or Gary Stevens, and all this talk of a secret pact is rubbish."

"Why didn't they make it when there were ten games to go last season and relegation was staring them in the face? Quite simply, it's because they weren't good enough."

WOUNDED WOLVES

WOLVES manager Graham Hawkins has told his players: "Wear shin pads or risk being fined."

The threat has come after winger Tony Towner received a nasty gash in a match at West Ham. Towner, like several other players at Molineux, does not wear pads.

But with Wolves fighting in the First Division basement, Hawkins said: "I have told the players that if anybody is injured in this way again and it means them being out for a week they will lose their wages for a week."

FANTASTIC

THE BRAUN/SHOOT Fan of the Year award will be presented at a star-studded luncheon at London's famous Cafe Royal next Thursday.

The ace supporter of 1984 will be chosen from the 16 Fan of the Week nominations which appeared in Shoot by a panel of judges including England manager Bobby Robson, captain Bryan Robson, Steve Perryman, Charlie Nicholas, Trevor Brooking, and Shoot Editor Peter Stewart.

Hosting the lunch will again be Frank Bough from BBC Breakfast Time.

Apart from his/her award the Fan of the Year will be Braun's guest at the European Championship Final in Paris.



Pathetic

Bryan Robson was right when he said Barcelona would struggle to finish halfway in the First Division. The Spaniards' performance in the Cup-Winners' Cup tie at Manchester United was pathetic.

COLIN CRAIG,
WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE.

United's 3-0 win in the second-leg of their Quarter-Final tie must rank as one of the greatest results in the club's history. OK, so Barcelona didn't look too brilliant, but that was simply because United played so superbly. Whatever you may say, Barcelona have some outstanding players, but even Maradona (above) didn't get a kick at Old Trafford and that speaks volumes for United's midfield.

Disgraceful!

Birmingham's Robert Hopkins is a disgrace to the game. At the latest count this season, he'd been booked 12 times, sent-off once and suspended three times. If he can't play within the rules, he shouldn't play at all.

PETER CARSON,
SOLIHULL, W. MIDLANDS.



Straight shooting from JIMMY GREAVES

Write exclusively to: Jimmy Greaves, SHOOT, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. £10 for Star Letter, £4 others published. Overseas readers receive SHOOT T-shirts (please state size, small, medium or large). When writing please mention two features you liked best in the latest issue.

This week's Star Letter and Special Shoot T-Shirt winner comes from Lars-Olof Wendler of Hoganas in Sweden. He writes:

BOOT OUT BURKINSHAW



I think Spurs should sack manager Keith Burkinshaw. In the last couple of years he has spent an absolute fortune on a number of top-class internationals yet he still hasn't got a team capable of challenging for the Championship. Come off it mate, Keith has been one of the most successful managers in British football in the last five years. Under Burkinshaw, Spurs have won the F.A. Cup twice, have reached the Milk Cup Final, are regularly involved in European football and always in the top half of the League. If that's not success, what is? OK, not everything has gone according to plan at White Hart Lane this season and Hoddle, Ardiles, Brazil and Archibald have all had their problems. And with a new set of directors at the club, I suppose it's just conceivable that there might be pressure on Keith to make Spurs Britain's Number One club within a matter of months. But to say he has been a failure at Spurs is just ridiculous.



The big problem is that when you get a reputation for being a dirty player, referees start to look out for you and often you're in the book before the game has even kicked-off. This is what happened with Martin Jol when he arrived at WBA, and it destroyed him as a player. I'm not trying to defend Hopkins, who obviously needs to cool down. I think Ron Saunders has been relying a bit too much on the heavy stuff to keep Blues out of relegation trouble and now it's up to him to calm things down a little.

Move over

John Wark's arrival at Liverpool has really put the cat among the pigeons. They haven't paid £450,000 for a reserve, so who loses his place at Anfield to make way for the Scottish International?

SUSAN COLEMAN,
SEVENOAKS, KENT.

At Ipswich, Wark always played in the middle of the park, but I can't see Graeme Souness getting the elbow so he'll have to adapt to a new role. I think Sammy Lee will also survive the shake-up, so it looks as if Craig Johnston could be the odd man out, although it's possible Craig could switch to the left and leave, Ronnie Whelan or Steve Nicol out in the cold. But that was the whole point of signing Wark — to create competition for places.

Money mad

Is money the only consideration in football nowadays? It seems that the Italian clubs only have to wave their cheque-books and all our stars go trotting off to the Continent.

DERRICK DAME,
SOUTH WIRRAL.

When you read of Karl-Heinz Rummenigge getting £800,000 a year from Inter Milan, how can you honestly blame any player for taking the chance to set himself up for the rest of his life within two or three years? And how can you blame clubs for selling when they're offered three or four million? As Ron Atkinson says, he was criticised for buying Bryan Robson for £1½million and now he'll be criticised if he sells him for £3½million. You just can't win!

Half-time chat

Don't you think TV is going too far by interviewing managers at half-time and even during the game? Surely we hear more than enough from them before and after the games.

STUART TODD,
HARLEPOOL.

Personally, I'd rather see a manager interviewed after the game when he's calmed down and is not so emotionally involved. Others prefer it when the manager concerned speaks out in the heat of the moment. It's all a matter of choice.

Mal practise

What gives Malcolm Allison the right to constantly comment on the Second Division promotion challengers? As a former boss of a club who'll do well to stay out of the Third, I don't think Allison's opinions count for much anyway.

IAN EKINS,
BATTLE, SUSSEX.

Everyone is entitled to voice their opinions, just as you are doing. You might not agree with everything Big Mal says, but at least he brings a little personality to the game. He's one of the game's few remaining characters and I hope he gets fixed up with a new club soon.



Belgian blow

As you've predicted that Belgium will do well in this year's European Championship, how do you think they'll be affected by the bribes scandal involving skipper Eric Gerets?

COLIN SWEET,
SELANGOR, W. MALAYSIA.

If you remember before the 1982 World Cup, Italy were hit by a similar bribes scandal involving Paolo Rossi and others. Upsets of one kind or another hit every nation at some time, and providing Belgium can settle down between now and June I don't think the loss of Gerets (above) should interfere too much with their performance.

'TIGER' WADDOCK

THINK of Queens Park Rangers and you automatically conjure up star names like Simon Stainrod, Jeremy Charles and John Gregory.

Yet there is a quiet man doing as much as anyone as Rangers prove they belong in Division One. He is Gary Waddock — still only 21, yet who has been around longer than any of them.

The ginger-haired midfield tiger joined Rangers straight from school, has been a first team regular for four years and has 11 full caps for the Republic of Ireland.

Waddock, who lived just a goal-kick from Wembley Stadium, chose Rangers in preference to clubs like Chelsea and Wolves and is convinced he made the right decision.

"I became involved with the club as a schoolboy and decided to sign because I was impressed, with their set-up. They had a good youth scheme — and that was important," he said.

"I got into the first team soon

after Tommy Docherty came back for his second spell with the club. The Doc has never been afraid to give kids a chance and he put me in.

"He may have had his critics, but I am not one of them. I thought the man was great.

"Then came Terry Venables — the best in the business, a fantastic coach. He has built a formidable squad here, making sure of such fierce competition that everyone has to fight to get into the side . . . and stay in.

"Terry is a tactical master, brilliant at organising teams. And the tragedy for us is that the synthetic surface at Loftus Road tends to overshadow how good the team is.

"People who come here talk about the pitch, not the football. Yet we have proved beyond doubt that we are equally effective on grass.

"Don't forget it was a superb away record that helped us win the Second Division last season. We won ten times on opponents' grounds — more than anyone else."

Gary's Irish parents got him the right to play for the Republic. He was invited to turn out for Eire's Under-21's and made such an impression he is now a regular in a side that includes star names like Liam Brady, Frank Stapleton, David O'Leary and Mark Lawrenson.

He moved to Hayes after marrying Marie last summer and admits he has no time for anything but football. The only thing he ever wanted to be was a professional and now he has achieved that goal is working hard to get right to the top.

But he has one burning ambition. "To win everything in sight with QPR. And the way things are going there is no reason why it should not happen," he says.

STAR FINDER FILE

The series the game's talking about



Terry Hurlock

BRENTFORD

Position: Midfield
Height: 5ft 9ins
Weight: 13st 2lbs
Age: 25
Games: 140
Goals: 12

Strengths:

Powerful tackler, accurate passer of the ball — an "iron man" in midfield to win the ball and set others on their way. Stamina and strength, very direct when he goes forward and possesses a useful shot.

Weaknesses:

Might need to control his aggression and resist the temptation to dive into tackles against more skilful First Division opponents. Might also need encouragement to be more adventurous when given the chance to go forward.

Manager Frank McLintock's verdict:

"My first impressions were of a player with a lot of qualities which could be worked on. Definitely an asset to any side."

HOW THE RATING WORKS

- 5 — Work to be done — but could make the grade.
- 6 — With luck could make an impact.
- 7 — Obvious potential, but needs time to adjust.
- 8 — Should make the grade.
- 9 — All the hallmarks of quality.
- 10 — Could make international class.

First Division potential rating: 7



Focus

RAY WILKINS MANCHESTER UNITED



Hobbies: I enjoy a game of tennis and am also quite a crossword fanatic.

Full name: Raymond Colin Wilkins.
Birthplace and date: Hillingdon in Middlesex on September 14, 1956.
Height and weight: 5ft 7½ins, 11 stone.
Married: Yes, to Jackie. We have one son, Ross.
Home: A detached house in Cheshire.
Car: Jaguar 3.4.

Previous club: Chelsea. I was with them for nearly ten years as a schoolboy, apprentice and professional before signing for United in September, 1979.

Nickname: They used to call me Razor. Don't ask me why — I haven't a clue! Now they call me Baldy!
Boyhood hero: George Best.
Team you supported as a boy: Chelsea.
Superstitions: I don't have any.
Most memorable match: Last season's F.A. Cup Final and replay against Brighton at Wembley. After losing a

Club honours: F.A. Cup winner 1983, Charity Shield winner 1983.

Favourite other sports: Tennis, golf and snooker. I play all three as often as I can after training.

Favourite other sports person: Tennis star Jimmy Connors, because he has such a tremendous will to win.

Favourite showbusiness stars: I love watching Western films, particularly those starring Clint Eastwood. I don't really have any other favourites, and my taste in music is also pretty varied.

Biggest influence on career: All the members of the coaching staff at Chelsea during my time at the club. I'll always be grateful for their help.

Ambitions for 1984: Simply to steer clear of any more injuries!

Long-term ambitions: To win as many honours as possible with United.



couple of months earlier to Liverpool in the Milk Cup Final, it was fantastic to finish on the winning side.

Biggest disappointment: Losing the captaincy of England and Manchester United last season after fracturing my jaw in a Milk Cup tie at Bournemouth.

International honours: 55 full England caps and Schoolboy, Youth, Under-21 and Under-23 honours.

Favourite current player:
Tottenham's Glenn Hoddle. He is such a gifted footballer and I'd love to see him really making his mark in the England team.

